THE BIBLICAL STORY OF CREATION

GIORGIO BARTOLI

John P. Green
229 Cota Ave.
Sunbury Pa.

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The Biblical Story of Creation

In the Light of the Recently Discovered Babylonian Documents

By

GIORGIO BARTOLI

PH.D., D.Sc., D.D.

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FOREWORD

(By a Florentine Friend)

THE genius of the age in which we live is decidedly opposed to a supernatural revelation of God to mankind. The present religion of humanity is the worship of mechanics, of science, of force, of Nature as it represents itself to man exclusively in its material aspect. Most men never think that physical and material Nature might, after all, be but a symbol of higher and spiritual things — a veil behind which the Infinite, the Absolute, the Almighty conceals himself. The majority of men, being carnally minded, stop at the material side of Nature and go no farther. The spiritual side of the universe is hidden from them; it is a mystery the existence of which they do not even faintly imagine: for it is a problem that does not touch them.

Hence Genesis—the Biblical narrative of how the heavens and the earth came into being—does not appeal to them. It leaves them cold and skeptical, or they laugh it to scorn because they suppose it flatly contradicts those themes,

that science, which they worship as their only god. The contradiction of Genesis to science is taken by them for granted and as undeniable—a matter of course, which no one can gainsay.

And now here is a highly-gifted man, a man of great experience, a trained theologian as well as a prominent scientist, who has come forward to maintain that Genesis, rightly interpreted, is by no means in contradiction with true science. Of science, falsely so-called, there is little discussion in this book.

Dr. Bartoli is specially qualified for the task he has undertaken. His life, one of purest self-denial and intense religious devotion, has been passed in study and in imparting knowledge to others. He lived for many years in the East, and is familiar with the tongues and the sacred books of the ancient nations. He is, moreover, a fervent admirer of the Bible, which he holds to be the only book really worth reading. He is a Christian,—an undenominational Christian. He might call himself a Bible Christian, but he prefers the simple name *Christian*. And he is in the pay of no church. He lives by his work, and as Professor of Geology and Chemistry he is now Director of a mine in Sardinia. Such a man deserves a hearing; his book has the seal of truth, be-

cause it is not merely his views that he puts forward. He seeks to resuscitate what he believes to be the old interpretation of Genesis, that which the Jewish writers taught in pre-Christian times, and which was followed by our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy apostles when they delivered to the nations the message of the Gospels.

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I

CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE FROM NOTHING

THERE is no book, perhaps, which has so taxed the mind of ancient and modern writers as the first of the five books of Moses, — Genesis. Numberless commentaries have been written on it, and it still continues to be commented upon, because its contents are so mysterious, so profound, and so pregnant with surprising and unforeseen meanings that no commentator can reasonably hope to satisfy the views of all his readers, and to solve all the mysteries connected with its mighty theme,— the creation of the universe out of nothing.

Genesis is also the book most bitterly and unceasingly combated by infidel science. Erudition, scholarship, encyclopedic knowledge, journalistic omniscience have all stood up in battle array against the first chapters of Genesis, which have been declared to be mythical, fabulous, and absolutely unhistorical.

Nor is this to be wondered at. The open and secret enemies of Christ and his Gospel in-

stinctively feel that, once Genesis is demolished and its narratives relegated to the Olympus of mythological folklore, the New Testament likewise must of necessity fall and crumble to pieces; because the two Testaments, the Old and the New, are so intimately connected that they form but one Book in two parts, one great Building, which is reared on the granite rock of Genesis and which raises its golden pinnacles toward the new Jerusalem, sung by the poet-seer John the divine.

The evolutionists, of course, reject the first chapters of Genesis because these flatly contradict their beloved theory; the Pantheists refuse to accept them because Genesis clearly proclaims the Personality of an Infinite God; the rationalists combat them in the name of reason and of science falsely so-called.

But, so far, there is little cause for surprise. What is rather to be marvelled at, and regretted, is that millions of weak Christians very readily give up Genesis as unimportant, thinking thereby to save the rest of God's revelation to man. Never was entertained a more shallow, foolish, and dangerous thought! With Genesis stands or falls the whole fabric of Christianity. Let Christians undeceive themselves! If the facts, the miracles, the wonders

affirmed and narrated in Genesis are myths, fables and legends, then the miracles narrated in other parts of Scripture and in the Gospels are not less fabulous and incredible. There is no reason to discriminate between the two. Those weak and injudicious Christians too easily forget that our Lord Jesus Christ constantly appeals to Genesis, and to the other books of the Pentateuch, as the inspired Word of God; and that he never for a moment doubted the historical authenticity and veracity of the Mosaic record. They forget that the twelve apostles, preaching throughout the world the Gospel of Christ, generally commenced their teachings by affirming before their Gentile hearers their faith in God, the Creator of heaven and earth out of nothing. Genesis went before the Gospel. The faith in one God, who had created the universe out of nothing, was made a stepping stone of ascent to ever loftier truths: the perfect comprehension of the divine plan of man's re-creation; his spiritual redemption.

No words can suffice to explain the importance which the doctrine of the creation of the heavens, of the earth, and of man out of nothing by an infinite and almighty God, had for the primitive Church. The ecclesiastical docu-

ments of those early days are full of it. The cathechisms or religious instructions that were imparted to the neophytes before they were admitted to holy baptism commenced with the teaching of Genesis. The first article of the Apostolic Creed proclaims the faith of the believer in one God, Creator of heaven and earth. The liturgy of the early Church is saturated with admirable and sublime expressions, whereby the faithful thank God for the works of creation. Those early Christians used to commemorate, each day in their prayers, that order of things which God, on that day, had created out of nothing. On Sunday they mentioned the general creation of the universe and the appearance of light. On Monday they recorded the making of the firmament. On Tuesday the appearance of the dry land and the creation of plant-life. On Wednesday the appearance of the sun, moon, and planets. On Thursday the creation of animal life. On Friday the fecundity of the earth and the creation of man. On Saturday the mysterious rest of God from the wonderful works which he had created. Adam the first man was created on a Friday; Christ, the second man, and the last Adam, on a Friday expired on the cross and

thus atoned for the sin committed by his prototype.

Nor was this constant teaching and commemoration of the creation of the universe made by the apostles without a cogent reason. They wanted by this to teach the early Christians the absolute dependence of man on God, a fundamental truth of the Old and New Testament. According to the inspired Word of the Bible, God is everything, man is simply nothing. Man is God's creature. Absolute being, independent existence, belong to God alone. The universe came forth through creation from the hands of God; man, of himself and in himself, possesses nothing, except sin; even the good works which he does would not be good if God did not help him to do them, anticipating him with his grace, accompanying him with the same, and crowning in him his gracious favors in the eternal life.

Man is nothing. This is the constant teaching of the Old Testament. This doctrine stands at the very base of the granite building of the Bible, which rests entirely on it. The absolute dependence of the universe and of man on God; the absolute lordship of God over the universe and over man are so constantly taught, repeated, insisted upon in the Old Testament, that

one might be inclined to think they were even pushed too far, exaggerated and made too much of. In fact, it is not merely said that the universe, the angels, the earth, and man are simply nothing when compared with God; that God is everything, the only Master, the only Lord, the only God; but it is likewise constantly affirmed that the physical evils, diseases, death, famine, pestilence, foreign invasions into the land of Israel come from God and happen through the command and direct will or through the special intervention of Jahwe, the almighty God.

This mysterious and magnificent conception, this sublime idea, this wonderful and daring affirmation rests exclusively on the central fact of the creation of the universe and of man out of nothing. Creation is to God what a legal deed of possession is to us. God possesses this absolute mastery over the universe and over man because he has created the one and the other out of nothing. If the universe was not created, but always existed, or if it evolved slowly and gradually from chaotic matter which did not owe its existence to God, he, then, is not by right Master and Lord of the universe. If on the contrary the universe and man owe their being and existence to God; if whatever man possesses, body, soul, children, country, all

came to him from God, nothing excepted; then man must be subjected and obedient to God because God is his Maker, his Creator, his Master, his Lord, his God. This truth forms, as I have said, the granite foundation of both the Hebrew and the Christian religions, and this is the reason why the apostles, preaching the divine message of Christ, taught the Gentiles as well as the Jews, first of all, this important truth.

On the other hand the creation of the universe and of man out of nothing manifests God's goodness, because only an infinitely good God could create the heavens and the earth and whatever is contained therein. Indeed, God being infinitely happy in himself and needing nothing, he could not have created such a beautiful and wonderful universe but for the sake of the creatures made by him, i. e., in order to make them share, so far as they are capable of it, in his being, wisdom, power, and happiness. Which happiness, for intellectual creatures, begins here on earth with the study and contemplation of the infinite God, mirrored and rendered almost visible and tangible through his creation, and will have its completion and perfection in the life to come, with the vision of God as he is in himself.

Therefore it is man's duty, so long as he

lives, to arrive through the study of created things at the knowledge of God; and "the wrath of God," as Paul says, "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations; and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:18-22).

According to the weighty words of Paul, all men, from the very creation of the earth, might have known God, clearly seeing him in his works and understanding his invisible perfections and attributes, which Paul sums up in "his eternal power and Godhead." God's almighty power, eternity, and Godhead are the chief attributes of the Deity. Could men also know the fact of the creation of the universe out of nothing? Undoubtedly, because, with regard to the origin

of the universe, no theory so satisfies the mind as creation out of nothing by an almighty and eternal God. Therefore rightly Paul affirms that men are inexcusable, because, God having manifested himself to them, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful. Hence their foolish heart was darkened, and, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. These words describe the mental state of millions of wiseacres, of philosophers, of rationalists, and of scientists falsely so-called. Throughout long centuries, from the earliest ages down to our day, millions and millions of men belonging to all nations believed, even though imperfectly, the creation of the universe out of nothing, through the power and wisdom of an almighty God; but philosophers, unfortunately, and people who deem themselves cultured, knowing, and wise, rejected this simple, natural and ancient belief; and there followed, on the origin of the universe, all kinds of theories, each one stranger and more fantastic than the other, so much so Cicero was amply justified when he uttered his memorable saying on philosophers: "Nihil est tam absurdem quod aliqui philosophorum non dixerint." "Nothing is so absurd that it has not been said by one or another of the philosophers."

This is not the place to refute the absurd theories of philosophers on the origin of the universe. As there are not two of them who, when thinking independently, agree with each other, it is not worth while to waste time on refuting them. I will rather mention briefly what was believed about our subject by the ancient nations, which, being nearer to the origin of things, might have known something more about them than philosophers, who came centuries and centuries afterward.

All ancient nations possessed certain books which they considered God-inspired, and which record the principal facts narrated in Genesis, just as in the Bible of the Hebrews. The Egyptians possessed the "Book of the Dead"; the Ancient Persians the "Avesta and Vendidad"; the Brahmins the "Vedas and Puranas"; the Babylonians the "Poem of Creation" and other narratives, contained in the tablets found at Nineveh and Babylon, which George Smith, Langdon, and others have translated into modern tongues; the Etruscans had the "Book of Ancient Doctrine" mentioned by Valerius Maximus, Varro, Cicero and many others; the Greeks possessed certain most ancient books, mentioned by Hesiod. So much for the nations nearer to us. But also the far distant nations,

as the Chinese, the Japanese, the Incas, the ancient Mexicans, the mysterious inhabitants of North America and of the Pacific Islands, the Scandinavians, the inhabitants of Africa preserved in written books and oral traditions the principal facts of Genesis, i. e., the creation of heaven and earth, the creation of man, his fall, the earthly paradise, the gigantic stature and long life of the antediluvian men and their unrighteousness and iniquity, and the universal deluge which swept them from the face of the earth. As to this latter tradition the learned Lenormant states that "it is an absolutely universal tradition, and that there is no people or fragment of a people which has not possessed it."

The sacred books of the nations are evidently based on Genesis. To be convinced of this, it will suffice to compare Genesis with the Poem of Creation written by the Babylonians, with the Avesta of the Persians, with the Vedas and the Laws of Manu of the Brahmins. But what a difference between these books and Genesis! The Biblical narratives of the creation of the universe and of man, of the temptation and fall of man, of the life of the first men upon earth, are sober, concise, almost without anthropomorphisms, devoid of heathen symbols, of fables, of

fantastic and poetic myths; and, moreover, they are rigidly monotheistic. The narratives of the same facts which we find in the books of the nations are diffuse, fantastic, grotesque, often absurd, puerile, and ridiculous, and always they are tainted with legends, fables, and myths, which alter and disfigure them completely.

As is rightly inferred, the Biblical narrative does not depend on the Oriental cosmologies, but these depend on Genesis. In fact all critics admit, as an indisputable canon of criticism, that of two narratives, both of them coeval or supposed to be so, and one depending on the other, that one is the older and the source of the other which is more concise in style, more sober in figure of speech, less polytheistic, and less marred by poetic and fantastic superstructures. Accepting this sound canon of historical criticism, no one can rightly doubt which is the older, the cosmology of Genesis or that propounded in the books of the nations. We justly infer that Genesis has been the model upon which the other cosmologies were woven, and that Genesis was the primitive source of them all.

This is true even with regard to the Babylonian Poem of Creation and the narratives connected with it, which are the oldest of all Ori-

ental cosmologies. That Poem, according to Langdon, its most recent translator (The Babylonian Epic of Creation, restored from the recently discovered Tablets of Assur, Oxford, 1923), was written during the first Babylonian Dynasty, which reigned between the years 2225 and 1926 B. C. At that time there existed in the family of the just Noah, who died, according to the chronology followed by Archbishop Ussher, in the year 1998 B. C., the record of the creation that we now read in Genesis; and that record was a written one, not merely oral, because men of profound learning have placed beyond the possibility of controversy the fact that the art of writing was generally known in those days, as indeed it is coeval with man, and does not fail to appear in the oldest documents of humanity.

The argument that I have so far stated is generally admitted by all learned Orientalists and by modern commentators on Genesis, but an important distinction must be drawn between their opinions and mine. All or almost all those scholars grant that in the beginning there was only one tradition or legend of creation; but according to them that was not the Biblical narrative, but the Babylonian. This, they say, the Hebrew priests of the Exile

learned in Babylon, accepted it as a plausible explanation of the great fact of the existence of the universe, purged it of all polytheistic and mythical excrescences, and reduced it to the Genesis we now read. They therefore affirm that in the beginning there existed the Babylonian legend, from which the Biblical narrative is derived, together with all other similar narratives found in other cosmologies. On the contrary, I maintain that originally men possessed the history of creation such as we now read in Genesis; that much later, owing to corruption of the Biblical narrative, there arose the Babylonian, Vedic, Avestic, Etruscan and Greek myths. First history, then legend; first the perfect, afterward the imperfect; first truth, afterward error; first monotheism, then in progress of time polytheism.

This doctrine is the only true one and I defy all the Lenormants in the world to disprove it. The canon of historical criticism which I have applied to my subject was not invented by me. It is the cardinal canon of the Higher Criticism: why, then, do the historians of comparative religions not follow it? Here is what the learned Lenormant writes: "It is the same narration," he says, speaking of the Babylonian and the Biblical story of the creation;

"they are the same episodes, succeeding one another in the same order; and yet one must be blind not to see that their meaning has become quite another. The exuberant polytheism which encumbered the Chaldaic [Babylonian] cosmology was carefully done away with, and the most rigid monotheism was introduced in its place. What expressed naturalistic notions, singularly gross and vulgar, has become the dress of moral verities of the highest order in the spiritual world. The essential traits of the tradition have been indeed faithfully kept; and yet, between the Bible and the Sacred Books of Chaldea [Babylonia] there yawns all the interval of one of the greatest revolutions which ever happened in human beliefs . . . Though others explain all this by a natural progress of the conscience of humanity, I see in it, without hesitation, the supernatural intervention of Divine Providence, and I bow before God who has inspired the Law and the Prophets" (Origine de l'Histoire, pages 19, 20).

There is indeed, as Lenormant says, a divine intervention of God in the world and in human things; but God did not supernaturally intervene in order to cleanse the sink of the Babylonic myths, i. e., to reduce them to the sober, concise, monotheistic narration of Genesis.

God did something better. God provided that the primitive tradition, namely, the revelation of himself made to humanity, should not be ruined or lost by all the peoples of the earth. God kept it pure and safe in the family of Adam, of Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and of the Hebrew people. Will one dare to maintain that the primitive tradition—i. e., the primeval revelation of God to humanity—was in its very source and cradle spoiled, tainted with foul myths and impure legends? First the historical fact, sober, concise; afterward the myth, the legend. First the pure and limpid source; then the brooklet, the muddy torrent, the turbid river. First the divine revelation, pure, immaculate, rich in thought, deep in meaning, exuberant with joy and spiritual life; afterward the Babylonian, Vedic, Etruscan or Greek poem, or myth, the novel, the fable, the fairy-tale, fantastic, imaginative, sensual, and luxuriant with material life. Does not this happen every day under our very eyes? Whence come myths, fables, and cinema stories, if not from historical facts altered, distorted, disfigured, tainted with sensuality and episodes to please the eyes of corrupted men, and pander to their worst passions?

Another point upon which I must detain the reader is the question whether in the Oriental cosmologies there appears the conception of creation out of nothing, i. e., without a preëxisting chaotic matter. The answer is sufficiently certain. Those cosmologies, at least in the fragmentary state in which they were handed down to us, do not teach in a clear manner the doctrine of creation out of nothing. They are more or less infected with pantheism; hence they maintain that chaos or primeval matter always existed, and from it the universe, nay the gods also, were created and came into being. We find indeed here and there words and thoughts which might be interpreted as a belief in a creation out of nothing, specially where the Vedic, Etruscan or Greek poets affirm that God "with a thought created the universe," and similar phrases, which are met with even in the most mythological Babylonian tablets; but only in the Bible is creation out of nothing clearly taught and expressly maintained. In the other cosmologies there is merely a trace, a vestige, a distant mention and nothing more.

What, however, in pagan mythologies can be strictly compared with Genesis is the progressive order of creation; the works of the six days; the idea of chaos; the origin of the first

men from God; their sin; the forbidden fruit, the tree of life, the serpent, the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, the ten patriarchs, and other points of lesser importance. But you look in vain in those Oriental cosmologies for the admirable monotheism of the Bible, or for that most fundamental truth of the creation of the universe out of nothing.

Another point which must not be passed over in silence is whether the ancients, leaving aside what their Sacred Book taught, ever believed in the creation of the universe out of nothing. It is difficult to answer this question definitely. We know for certain that many wise and cultured men of ancient times knew this truth, and that others had a glimpse of it as from afar; but the great mass of the common people, seduced by the fables of heathenism and the foolish theories of their philosophers, accepted as an uncontrovertible truth the eternity of chaos, whence the very gods, the supreme rulers of cosmos, drew their origin.

The distortion of the primitive narration of creation was certainly due to the sickly imagination of poets; but have ancient philosophers conceived in a more worthy manner how the universe came into being? Not to mention minor philosophers, let us listen to Plato, whom

ancient Greece revered as her greatest thinker. Plato represents Socrates, and Socrates was the best man an idolatrous world could produce. As to the origin of the universe, Plato distinctly says that it was due to God. "All things were without reason and measure . . . this, I say, being their nature, God fashioned them by form and number . . . and out of them he constructed the universe." And again, in the same Timaeus, Plato asks: "Was the world, I say, always in existence, and without beginning or created and having a beginning? Created, I reply, being visible and tangible and having a body, and therefore sensible; and all sensible things which are apprehended by opinion and sense are in process of creation and created. Now, that which is created, must of necessity be created by a Cause . . . He put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, and framed the universe to be the best and fairest work in the order of nature." Elsewhere in the same book Plato proceeds to describe the manner of the creation of men and animals, where it is difficult to say whether the Greek philosopher spoke in a parable or in sober earnest. (The translation is by Dr. Jowett; compare Sections 30, 32, 42, 70, 90, 91, 92 of the Timaeus.)

Thus wrote Plato; in a manner, however,

that makes it quite difficult for many to know what he really thought about creation. Yet any man, although not very talented, provided he had led a good life, might from the contemplation of the universe rise to the vision of an Almighty God, Infinite, Eternal, Creator of heaven and earth out of nothing. The often repeated argument of the egg or the hen, which in the beginning owed their respective being to a Cause, prior and anterior to them, which was neither a hen nor an egg, has lost nothing of its old cogency. If many philosophers do not feel its force or do not see its irresistible logic, this is to be attributed to the weakness of the philosophers' brain, not to the feebleness of the argument. The universe is an organism where law reigns supreme, and where the application of means to understood ends is quite visible. This presupposes a directing and thinking Mind. The universe is a masterpiece of art, where order, beauty, goodness shine in an undiminished splendor. But where art is, it stands to reason that there likewise exists the artist. The universe is the issue of numberless calculations, some of which fall due within a short time, others after millenniums. Who could possibly make those calculations, devise those starry schemes, combine those cosmic

facts, but an Eternal Mind, a Mind which never dies, and which, day by day, resolves in an adequate manner the infinite problems and riddles of the universe? Therefore man can, even without the special help of books, of able reasoning, or of teachers, arrive at a fair knowledge of God as the Infinite Creator of the universe. In consequence, if the philosophers of the heathen world did not know God, they are to be blamed for it; it must not be attributed to the unknowableness of the universe. Therefore, to repeat again Paul's words, they are inexcusable, and "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

II

THE MANNER OF THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

HOW did God create the universe? According to the sacred books of the nations, the universe proceeds from chaos, whether this had been forever existing, or owed its being to an Infinite God. Pagan philosophers and scholars of Christian times have also generally followed this point of doctrine. God, they said, created at first the chaotic or primordial matter, or he made use of the same, already preëxisting from eternity, in order to make out of it the heavens and the earth. The evolutionist philosophers of our days admit naturally enough the eternity of elementary matter, whence through a slow evolution they produce everything, — the heavens, the earth, man, and if necessary even God himself.

Christian thinkers hold more or less the following opinion: God created at first out of nothing the elementary matter, described in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis, out of which, later on, in six successive days or

periods, he created the heavens, the earth, and all that is contained in them. Augustine thus sums up in his "Confessions" (Book xii, ch. 20) the various interpretations which Christian doctors gave in his day of the two first verses of Genesis. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; i. e., God made in his co-eternal Word intelligent and sensible creatures, spiritual and material. Another says: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; i. e., God made in his co-eternal Word all this immense edifice of the material world, with all the visible and known beings which it contains. Another follows this opinion and says: "God in his co-eternal Word made the shapeless and chaotic matter of the material world, that confusedly contained the heavens and the earth, which afterward being duly developed and ordered, offer now themselves to our senses." This last opinion, recorded by Augustine, is that which, as I have said, is generally followed by Christian writers, —believers in the Bible belonging to all churches. "God," to use again another quotation by Augustine, "made, at first, the chaotic and elementary matter, an entity which contained in itself in a confused state the germs or seeds of heaven and earth, which in the course of time, having germinated and

grown, make now a beautiful show of themselves with all the creatures that are in them." ("Confessions"; ibid.)

Now I ask if this is really the right interpretation of the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Did God verily create at first the elementary or chaotic matter, out of which, afterward, he constructed in six days or periods the heavens and the earth? We shall discuss the Biblical text later on; at present let us consider whether God really created chaos, or if he may possibly have created it.

The elementary or shapeless matter, called also chaos by the Bible, is described as follows in the second verse of Genesis: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Others translate: "And the earth was empty and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." And again: "And the earth was solitude, and chaos and darkness covered the abyss." The Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament translates the second verse as follows: **he de ge en*

* In view of the fact that this volume is intended for the general reader, the English transliterations of the Greek, Hebrew, or other languages do not include accents or other diacritical markings, the special significance of which is familiar chiefly to those who read the original languages.

aoratos kai akataskeuastos. "Now, as for the earth, it was wasteness and emptiness." The sacred writer beheld the earth in wasteness and emptiness, shut up in gloom. Matter was there, but shapeless, formless, unconditioned. Over the earth materials, mingled with the waters of the deep *(tes abussou),* moved or brooded the Spirit of God. "The Hebrew word used here by the Bible," remarks Professor Minocchi, "is *tohu vabohu,* desolation and emptiness, as a kind of empty desert *(tohu)* or of an infinite dark space *(bohu).* Yet immediately afterward the primeval chaos is represented by the term *tehom,* which has the linguistic meaning of a stormy oceanic abyss, and which is simply the masculine form of the corresponding expression *Tiamat* (Babylonian pronunciation of the Semitic *Tihamat)* of the Poem of Creation, already quoted. The primeval *tehom* (abyss) comprehended the earth (the *dry* of verse 9) and the waters, i. e., all the present universe . . . but mixed up together, confused as in a horrible mud, in whose bosom all the possible germs of existence and life were dispersed and smothered." (Prof. S. Minocchi, "Genesis.")

All the ancient books of the nations record the Biblical chaos, and describe it more or less

in the same manner. We have a beautiful description of it in Hesiod, from whom Ovid borrowed his own, which we still read in the first chapters of his "Metamorphoses." But, as usually happens, poets as well as philosophers exaggerated and distorted the Biblical conception of chaos. The chaos of the Babylonian, Vedic, Persian, Egyptian and Greek poets is by far stranger, more grotesque and horrible, than the Biblical chaos. Philosophers, besides, the Christian philosophers not excluded, have reduced the chaos of the Bible to a kind of "materia prima" of primeval matter of Aristotelian reminiscence, thus introducing metaphysics into the Bible, the fallible word of man in the midst of the infallible Word of God!

According to the Bible, chaos possessed these exclusive characteristics: it was something dark, waste, confused, formless; it was earth and water mingled, in such a manner, however, that the abyss (Heb., *tehom)*—i. e., the dark waters—prevailed over the solid portion of chaos, which was entirely bound up by the same. This, and only this, is the Biblical chaos: the condition of our universe as described in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis. I will make a scientific analysis of it later on; but for the moment I will only add that, adher-

ing closely to the Bible in the verse just quoted, and referring to other summary descriptions or allusions found in other books of Scripture, the chaotic state of the earth, as described in the second verse, may properly be compared to a colossal ruin, a cosmic destruction, a world-cataclysm, the efficient and concomitant cause of which was water, which submerged and drowned in its bosom an entire world.

The chaos of Oriental poets and of metaphysical philosophers is absurd in itself and impossible, because it contains contradictory elements. The "first matter" of Aristotle cannot exist by itself and in itself, being by definition something which is "*nec quid, nec quale, nec quantum,*"—i. e., without being, quality, and quantity. But the chaos of the second verse of Genesis not only is in itself possible and can exist, but it existed indeed, and perhaps for a long time.

But was chaos, as described in Genesis, really the object of the divine creation? The answer is absolutely negative. It is absurd to think that God ever wished to create chaos or that he really did create it. Chaos is confusion, darkness, a disorderly mass of numberless things, drowned and buried in a dark ocean of muddy waters. God could never create such a thing.

The Greek interpreters of the Septuagint called the earth "*akataskeuastos,*" namely, not made in an orderly manner, not well distributed in its parts; made not according to art, hence chaotic and confused. Is it credible that God, the Infinite Artist of the universe, should have created something disorderly, inartistic, confused, chaotic? Being God, Infinite Order, Measure, Proportion, Beauty, he could not create wasteness, emptiness, gloominess, something that has neither order, measure, proportion or beauty. Chaos contains characteristics that are absolutely antagonistic to God. We have no example in nature of anything which came into being with the characteristics attributed to the Biblical chaos, or primeval matter.

Everything that the earth produces is perfect, complete, beautiful. See, for example, a leaf, a tree, a flower, an atom of matter, an animal, a crystal, a hail-stone, a snow-flake, a cloud, a sun-ray. Beauty, proportion, harmony of parts are the constant and distinctive characteristics of nature. Order, beauty, and symmetry of parts accompany every created thing throughout the whole cycle of its existence, from its cradle to the tomb. How beautiful is a vegetable seed, which in its rich and mysterious nature contains, though in micro-

scopic dimensions, the whole tree! And likewise how beautiful is an egg, oftentimes painted in the most glorious colors. How beautiful is a bud, a shoot of a tree; the tree in the full glory of its adult life, and generally also in its majestic and decadent days, provided man does not interfere with its natural growth! And beautiful also is man in the various phases of his existence. A child is beautiful: beautiful are the boy and the girl: most beautiful the young man and the maid in the full bloom of their youth, provided they be born in a healthy condition and that through vices they destroy not their fair appearances. But man and woman are beautiful even in their old age, when about to complete the cycle of their earthly existence. Why, then, should only the earth, nay the whole universe, have come into being ugly, disorderly, confused, chaotic?

Observe, moreover, that when God proceeds to create, in six successive days, every thing in particular, he takes care to affirm that he "saw that it was good," i. e., perfect, beautiful, well proportioned, as the Hebrew word translated here "good" means all this. Marduk, likewise, the wise God and Creator in the Babylonian Poem of Creation, creates perfect and beautiful things, and he also makes them by virtue of

his word. God's affirmation that his works were good,—i. e., beautiful, orderly, perfect,—is repeated each day of creation, the second only excepted, when the modern Hebrew text is silent about the praise. But the Septuagint Greek interpreters who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek about 200 B. C. included the clause, "And God saw that it was good," even at the end of the second day: and it is probable that the Hebrew text followed by them contained it. I believe that the Septuagint translation, often followed by our Lord and by the apostles, is to be preferred to the Massoretic text used by modern Jews.

God, therefore, created and still creates everything in a state of perfection: why, then, in the beginning, should he have created the universe in a state of desolation, of confusion, of disorder, of gloom, reserving to himself to impart to the same universe afterward order, proportion, symmetry, light, art, and beauty? This is, to my belief, inconceivable. As God does not create or cause moral disorder,—that is to say, sin,—so he cannot produce physical disorder: because, just as sin is disorder in spiritual creatures, so chaos is sin in the material universe. Sin, according to the Scripture, results in the "second death," whereas the

death of the body is the first death. Both forms of death, according to the constant teaching of the Bible, both Old and New Testament, "entered into the world . . . by sin" (Rom. 5:12), whereas God has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek. 33:11). Death is the greatest of disorders in the physical order. Through death the body is disorganized, dissolved, deprived of order, of symmetry, of beauty. A disintegrated corpse is, in the physical order, a small chaos; something confused, and horrible to behold. Now death, I repeat, is the effect of sin. Death, according to Paul, is the wages of sin. Where sin is, there is disorder, confusion, moral ugliness. Nor does sin stop in the soul only; from the soul it passes into the body; from the individual man it passes into society, into the body politic; from the spirit it passes into the soul. Man's diseases are due either to the individual's disorders, ignorances, or sins, or to the sins of parents, or finally to the first sin of our progenitors. In like manner, all the social disorders that trouble the communities of men, wars, revolutions, and the like are due simply to sin.

If, therefore, in the first day of creation there was chaos, there must have been some sin, its primary cause. If, at the beginning of things,

a universe existed that was covered with darkness, confusion, embraced by destruction, immersed in the dark waters of an abysmal chaos, we may ask where sin was, and whose sin it was which caused all that. Who sinned, that the universe, created by God in perfect beauty, should be reduced to such a ruin? Who was the primary cause of such a disaster? To whom was the great cataclysm due, which changed a most beautiful world into a frightful chaos? Man certainly was not the cause of all this, because man was not yet created. Who, then, was the primary cause of such a cosmic disaster? the pages that follow will give what the writer believes is the Scriptural answer to these questions.

Isaiah, in his prophecy (45:18), records God's words as follows: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain [Heb., *tohu*]; he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." Note the sublime solemnity with which this passage opens and closes. God solemnly affirms that he did not create the earth waste, empty and disorderly, but he formed it to be inhabited. These words in Isaiah are the key that will open the

door of the right interpretation of the first and second verses of Genesis.

God, through the mouth of his prophet, affirms that he did not create the earth to be chaos, but to be inhabited. God therefore did not form the earth in a chaotic state, but in such a state as to be immediately habitable. Chaos, therefore, is due to another cause, not to God. Not a few modern writers, as for instance the contributor to the French Review, "La Revue Biblique," hold the same view. "We cannot," says one of them, "insist upon the creation of chaos: it is absurd to think that God created a matter absolutely shapeless and formless." (Revue Biblique, 1896, p. 381.)

If God did not create chaos, who, I ask again, was the cause of it? Who was the cause of that mighty disaster, of that appalling cataclysm, which reduced a beautiful world into a chaos? How can we reconcile the first and second verses of Genesis, which seem to attribute everything to God?

To solve this interesting problem, we must compare the first two verses of Genesis with other passages of Scripture. As we have seen above, not a few interpretators in the days of Augustine (A. D. 400) explained the first verse in this manner: that God, in a first time or mo-

ment of time, created heaven and earth in a state of completion and perfection, with all those ornaments and embellishments that were congenial to them; and in a second time God, in six days or periods, re-created or re-constructed the earth, or better, our solar system, which, owing to a mysterious, appalling and sudden catastrophe, had fallen into the power of darkness, confusion, desolation, gloom, emptiness and chaos. Understood in this sense the first verse, "God created the heavens and the earth," does not refer at all to the elementary or chaotic matter described in the second verse, out of which he made everything: but it must be interpreted in its general and *prima facie* meaning; i. e., as affirming that God, in a moment, and without succession of days or periods, created the heavens and the earth in a perfect state and condition and adorned with all richness and beauty. And we must add, that, between the general creation affirmed in the first verse and the description of chaos in the second verse, there elapsed a long time, during which took place a general catastrophe of our world, and in consequence a new creation, or rather a reconstruction or restoration of the earth and of our solar system, according to the natural

and obvious meaning of the first two verses of Genesis.

This interpretation of the first verses of Genesis was held and taught by many Christian writers in the days of Augustine: comparatively few teach it now; yet, as I think, it is the only true interpretation of the Biblical story of the creation. Fifty years ago it was taught and defended against adverse criticism by Cardinal Wiseman, and long before him by the learned German scholar Dr. Rosenmüller; unfortunately they had no followers. As they were no scientists, their theory was rejected in the name of science. The present writer is a professor of Chemistry and a Geologist: and he challenges any scientist to maintain, in the face of hard facts, the false theory of evolution. However, most Christian writers, still under the wrong impression that secular science, modern science, really knows something about the origin of the universe, endeavor to attune their Scriptural conclusions to the data of science falsely so-called,—without succeeding, however, in convincing scientists, and on the other hand giving infidels a just cause for amusement. The fact is, as Dr. Hummelauer among Roman Catholics and many other scholars among Protestants have conclusively proved, that a real accord

and harmony between the facts of the Bible and the claims of "science" does not exist and never will exist. If even Dr. Antony Stoppani, a believer in the Bible, a geologist of great learning, and a pronounced adversary of the false theory of evolution, did not succeed in bridging over the chasm intervening between the distinct affirmations of the Bible and the data of geology, botany, zoology, and astrophysics, who will ever hope to have success where he utterly failed? Biblical concordism, as all admit, has no chance of persuading any man of science. There remains, then, nothing except to study as deeply as possible the interpretation which was generally followed from the times of the apostles, and which afterward, much to the loss of Biblical studies, was abandoned: that theory which at the time of Rosenmüller was called by common agreement: "*Restitutionism.*"

This interpretation is supported by a number of convincing reasons, of which the principal ones are here noted. First of all, the *prima facie* interpretation of the first verse of Genesis is that it means the creation on the part of God of the heavens and of the earth. We must take the words of the Bible as they are. The inspired writer does not say that in the begin-

ning God created the elementary or cosmic matter, out of which, afterward he made heaven and earth: the Bible simply states that God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. I wonder how Christian believers dare place an artificial interpretation on the clearest words of Genesis. They have no right to do so. The Bible says simply that God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth. What can those words mean? Elementary, primeval, and cosmic matter? By no means. The Scripture evidently meant the heavens we see, in all their perfection and beauty, and the earth that we live upon. Why, then, give another and far-fetched interpretation to the first verse of Genesis?

Moreover, no time is marked between the first, second and third verse of Genesis. The first day or period commences with the appearance of light, at the fifth verse. The first verse stands alone. God, in the beginning, in a first time, nay, at the beginning of all time, created the heavens and the earth in a perfect state and condition. The Septuagint interpreters translate the second verse in such a manner as to let us understand that between the first and second verses intervened a very long time; or at least, that between the five verses there was

a break, a literary gap, a suspension of meaning; that the narration of the creation of the heavens and the earth there stops in order to pass to something else, quite different. In fact, the second verse opens with an adversative particle which the Greeks use when they want to distinguish one thing from another, or to oppose a former to a latter: i. e., "but the earth was..." "now, as for the earth, it was..." *"he de ge . . ."*

Why did the Septuagint interpreters translate the Hebrew text in such a manner? Was it their intention to oppose to the heavens and the earth of the first verse, created in all the beauty and loveliness of God, the dark chaos of the second verse? This is very likely,—nay, as I believe, quite certain. If this is so, the obvious and natural meaning of the first verse is that God created the heaven and the earth at the beginning in a perfect state or physical condition, complete in themselves, full of joy, beauty and loveliness.

And this is clearly proved by the second chapter of Genesis, verses 4-6. We read:

"These are the generations [origins] of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the

field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

If these verses of Genesis have any meaning, they undoubtedly mean that the creation of the heavens and of the earth occurred in a single day, yes, in a single instant, and that the universe appeared suddenly, in a state already of full growth, ripeness, beauty, loveliness, immortal youth. In fact, it is said very clearly that in a single day were created the heavens and the earth, and every plant and herb of the field appeared upon the earth. And in order to make it the more unmistakable and intelligible, there is distinctly and positively excluded, from the range of possibility, the appearance of the plants and of the herbs as due to rain from the sky or from man's work: because it had neither as yet rained upon the earth, nor had man yet been created. On the contrary, in the first chapter, verses 11-13, it is said that the grass, the herb, and the tree were brought forth from the earth the third day; how, then, does the sacred writer affirm here that the grass, the herb, the tree appeared in the same day when

the heavens and the earth were created, in a day not numbered, the duration of which is not fixed, a day moreover, which has neither morning nor evening?

How is all this to be explained? Is there, perchance, a flagrant contradiction between the whole first chapter, narrating the creation in six days, and the verses of the second chapter just quoted, narrating the appearance of grass and plants in the day when the heavens and the earth came into being? Some say that the first verse of the first chapter, as well as the above-mentioned verses of the second chapter, are but the summary of the first chapter. Others maintain that they are due to different documents, of which the later redactors of Genesis made use, after the Exile, in the compilation of the book. Let us dismiss this latter modernistic view, because it is absurd, gratuitous, and a contradiction in terms. A decadent age, such as that which followed the Exile, could never have produced the masterpiece of Genesis; nor were the Jews that returned from Babylon so stupid as to accept, as a sacred and infallible narrative, the fabulous romance of a cunning priest. There remains the more respectable opinion which affirms that the aforesaid verses

are a duplicate or a summary of the first chapter.

But even this explanation must be excluded. In Genesis, especially in the first chapters, there are no repetitions of any kind. Everything is described with the greatest brevity and precision. Who is authorized to say that the first chapter had two summaries, one in chapter 1, verse 1, the other in chapter 2, verses 4-6? Besides, these latter verses do not contain a mere repetition of the fact of the creation of the heavens and of the earth. These are recorded only in order to insist on the fact that the plants and the herbs were created in a perfect state and full grown in the same day in which the heavens and the earth were created. The sacred text insists on the unity of time when creation took place, and on the simultaneousness of the divine action, and on the immediate origin from God of the plants and herbs which embellished the earth. In order, then, to demonstrate that the plants and herbs had not grown spontaneously and by themselves in virtue of rain from the sky, or because man had sown and cultivated them, the sacred text states that no man was yet in existence who might have tilled the ground; finally, that the trees and the herbs appeared suddenly, in

a day; in the same day, in fact, on which the heavens and the earth were created. It is impossible to avoid the impression which the attentive reading of these verses makes on the spirit of the thoughtful reader: the universe came into being, most beautiful, most perfect, most orderly, in an instant, through the mighty power of an Infinite God.

This impression is the more confirmed if we consider other passages of the Bible. There are a number in which it is said that the creation of the heavens and of the earth took place in an instant, and that the universe, from its very beginning, was perfect and complete. These Scripture passages induced many learned Jews, before and after Christ, to follow the interpretation which I am setting forth. Among them should be mentioned Philo, who taught this for many years. He was followed in the same path by the great Origen and his school, and later on by Augustine, Abelardus, Alcuinus, Scotus Erigena, Cardinal Cajetan, Melchior Canus, and many others who, however, gave to creation a symbolical rather than a historical meaning.

To review what we have seen, therefore, verses 4, 5, 6 of the second chapter of Genesis are not a mere repetition or a summary of the

first chapter; they are an explanation of the first verse of the first chapter; they give it a richer meaning and value. For if the first verse, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," does not signify just what it expresses, what is its meaning? If it does not mean the creation of the universe in all its beauty, splendor and loveliness, what does it mean? Certainly not elementary or cosmic matter, much less chaos. The earth, the sea, the firmament, the sun, the moon, the stars, the plants, the animals were created in successive days: what, then, *was* created in the beginning, when no mention has yet been made of time?

Let us conclude this chapter by saying: the heavens and the earth were created, all together, in a single instant, in the beginning, in the most ancient time, or rather before time, by the co-eternal Word of God. They were created in a state and condition of beauty, perfection and loveliness. The first verse of Genesis stands alone. It is explained by the 4th, 5th and 6th verses of the second chapter. Between the first creation, indicated by the first verse, and the description of chaos of the second verse, there occurred a cosmic catastrophe, an appalling cataclysm of worlds, whereby not

only our earth was broken up into fragments, but even the solar system was displaced, commingling with the earth, and the whole world became a confused mass of heterogeneous elements, a dark, waste and formless chaos. Genesis does not narrate the appalling catastrophe; it postulates it as known; but other books of Scripture allude very clearly to it. And the record of the catastrophe has remained and lingered on for centuries and centuries in the imagination of the Gentiles, who have mentioned it in their sacred books and poems.

III

CREATION OF THE ANGELS, AND THEIR REBELLION AGAINST GOD

MANY interpreters of the first verses of Genesis have put the question, why did not the inspired writer, narrating the creation of the heavens and of the earth, mention the creation of the angels, of whose existence the Bible is full, and whose creation the ancient Hebrews always attributed to the Almighty God?

To this question various answers have been given. Many Christian teachers, before and after Augustine, believed that the angels were included in the general creation indicated in the first verse: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." As the Hebrew word for heaven is plural, so many interpreters believed that one of those heavens, or ornaments of that heaven, created by God, were the angels, whom the ancient Hebrews called *Elohim,* or sons of God. They were believed to be intellectual creatures, endowed with lofty and sublime minds, living in a supernat-

ural world, obedient servants and trusty messengers of Jahwe.

Others, on the contrary, think that the creation of the angels is presupposed in the first verse, not narrated; and this because of a certain allusion to angels, found in the first verse of Chapter 2, where it is said: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." The Hebrew has *sabha* especially used of military ranks, an army. With Orientals this term *sabha* (host, army), was used in a polytheistic sense; they said it of lesser gods, who they believed existed in each single star, at the service of the greater gods, dwelling in the planets. This heavenly host, with the Hebrews, were the angels, who, as well as man, were God's creatures. Scholars and Orientalists know quite well that in the East it was a general belief that the stars, the sun, and the planets were the celestial abodes of quasi-divine beings, that is, of angels, who had the care of them, preserved them from mishaps, and guided them in their giddy races across the heavens. The same Orientalists can tell us that these angels, often in the Scripture called the host of heaven, only ruled a star or a group of stars, but were, under God, the masters of the same. Thus Dante describes those

angels, whom he paints in glowing colors, as presiding over the seven spheres of heaven; and in so doing he declares that the union of the angel with his star or group of stars is so intimate, so close, that the two make but one thing, and the two natures, the material and the spiritual, amalgamate into one.

Nor had the ancient Hebrews a different opinion. For in the Bible the host of heaven are the angels, good and bad, represented by the stars which they rule, and whose worship is vehemently and constantly condemned by the prophets of Israel. Such passages are well known. Two will suffice here. "Hear, thou, therefore, the word of the Lord," said the prophet Micaiah to Ahab. "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left" (1 Kings 22:19). God, likewise, thus speaks to Job out of the whirlwind: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations

thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" The morning stars are certainly identical with the sons of God of the second part of the hemistich, this being the rule in Hebrew poetry. All the ancient Christian teachers interpreted the word "morning stars" as referring to the angels, called stars of the morning, because they had been created by God at the dawn of creation, before the creation of the material universe. On the evening of that day took place the destruction of the earth, described in the second verse, before God pronounced the portentous word wherewith (i. e., through his Word, who is Light), he illumined the darkness of chaos.

When we say that the creation of the heavens and of the earth described in the first verse of Genesis, had taken place in no definite time, we mean that it was then morning; it was the glory of God, the kingdom of light, which in the Scripture is a symbol of beauty, of order, of divine grace; whereas darkness is a symbol of moral disorder, of ugliness, of sin, of Satanic power. To this must be referred a most ancient tradition, recorded several times by Dante in his immortal poem, narrating that the universe

had come into being at springtime, thus signifying its vigor, its youth, its beauty, its glorious life, such, in fact, as it came forth from the hands of a beautiful and immortal Artist, the Supreme Ruler and Architect of the universe.

God, therefore, created the heavens and the earth, and he created also an almost infinite number of spiritual beings, of high minds, noble, sublime, by far more intelligent than man, whose principal characteristics, according to the Bible, are "wisdom and strength." Although angels be pure spirits,—that is, bodiless beings,—yet they can often assume a visible form and thus appear to men. Their number is well nigh infinite; their strength and power almost limitless. As noted above, the angels preside over the movements of the material heavens, lest these should deviate from the path which God fixed for them. According to Scripture, stars, planets, nations and individual men are given in custody to angels, who may do with them what they please, always, however, under the will of God. The union of the angel with the star he presides over is moreover, according to Dante, so intimate and close that the two beings make but one. The stellar heaven described by Dante was presided over by a cherub, and all the other heavens, and all the

terraces of purgatory, were guarded by angels who presided over them.

The angels were created in a state of perfect freedom of will, as God himself is absolutely free and the very source and infinite fountain of moral liberty. In consequence angels also, like men, can sin, can deviate from the path of righteousness and of the divine law under which, of necessity, they were created, because no being whatever comes into existence except under the dominion of law. The Bible states that the angels sinned; that they freely violated the law imposed upon them by Almighty God, thus changing into evil angels and falling from their high estate of holiness and light. The existence of wicked spirits, called devils, demons or Satans,—i. e., tempters,—is affirmed everywhere in the Bible; it was accepted and acted upon by our Lord Jesus Christ, and it was likewise admitted by all Oriental cosmologies.

As the Bible narrates the temptation and the fall of the first man, so it tells us of the fall of the rebellious angels. The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, under the symbols of the wicked kings of Babylon and Tyre, describe the sin and the ruinous fall of the fairest star of the morning; of that sublime angel who, from being the chief

and leader of all angels, became the chief and leader of all rebellious spirits against God. The two prophets certainly meant also the two kings of Babylon and Tyre, living in their days; but the images which they use in their prophecies, the phraseology and the ideas which they attribute to them, reach much farther, and are more applicable to Lucifer, the morning star, the rebel against God, than to the two impious kings of Babylon and Tyre. Thus believed and taught many Christian thinkers of antiquity, and even some rationalistic commentators of the Bible take the same view now.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that

opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa. 14: 12-16).

And Ezekiel thus speaks of the king of Tyre: "Thus saith the Lord God; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: . . . Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee . . . Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon

the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more" (Ezek. 28: 2-19).

Who is this star of the morning, this anointed cherub that covereth and liveth upon the holy mountain of God, dressed in all the most beautiful precious stones of God? All the ancient Christian teachers saw in him that sublime

angel, that most high cherub, the chief of angels and perhaps their king, who rebelled against God, drew after him through deceit a third part of the stars of heaven, and, being banished from heaven, fell down headlong upon the earth. "I saw," says John in the Revelation, "a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit . . . and they [the demons] had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon" (Rev. 9:1, 11).

Elsewhere John describes the sin and fall of Satan: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: . . . And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his

ngels were cast out with him" (Rev. 12:3, 4, -9).

This marvelous narrative is not a myth nor n Eastern legend—it is the story of what hap-ened in heaven before the creation of man; story confirmed by the Infinite God in the per-on of Jesus when he said: "I beheld Satan as ghtning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18). esus had sent seventy of his disciples to reach throughout the land of Palestine the oming of the kingdom. "And the seventy re-urned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the evils are subject unto us through thy name." nd Jesus replied with the mysterious words ust quoted, which mean: "You must not be urprised that even the demons, cast out by ou in my name, flee from their habitations in ne bodies of men. In my pre-mundane exist-nce, when I was with the Father, I witnessed s a spectator the defeat of Satan, who, con-uered by Michael and his angels, fell as light-ing from heaven."

The Greek word *theoreo* signifies to see, to itness, to assist as a spectator at some spec-acle. The spectacle was the war fought in eaven and won by Michael and his angels gainst Lucifer, the morning star, the conse-ated cherub of Isaiah and Ezekiel. As every

word pronounced by Jesus has a profound meaning, it is not without grave reason that he compared the fall of Satan to the fall of lightning. Where lightning falls, it brings ruin, and the more powerful the flash, the greater the ruin caused by it. Where did the lightning described by Jesus strike if not upon the earth? And what ruin did it not produce?

All the more, that not only Satan fell on the earth, but all his angels with him. How many were they? Who could count them? They were, say the Scriptures, a third part of the stars, that is, of the angels of heaven. Who has ever succeeded in counting the stars of heaven? Modern astronomy reckons them by millions and millions: and the Scriptures suggest, as I have already said, that every star, every planet, every element, and under certain conditions, every man has an angel deputed as guardian. Then how many good angels are there? Who can count them? Well, a third part of the angels, seduced by Satan, changed from angels of light to angels of darkness or demons, and transformed the noble gifts of their lofty intellects into hatred, envy and jealousy toward God who drove them out of heaven.

But it is vain "to pit oneself against fate," as Dante says. As they could accomplish noth-

ng against God, these miserable creatures
ented their malice upon the earth, where they
ell in millions, or rather in hundreds of mil-
ions. That disastrous fall produced a world-
ataclysm. Our solar system was convulsed,
lisembowelled, and reduced to chaos—confu-
ion, darkness, complete disorder. The sun,
he planets and the moon were veiled and
lrowned in the upper waters of the heaven,
vhich were precipitated like colossal ava-
anches on the earth, and became mingled, or at
east partly so, with its seas and oceans. The
arth, receiving such a weight of waters, lost
ts center of gravity, was split up, broken and
educed to fragments. The plants and animals,
n which the earth was very rich, perished all
ogether with a sudden and violent death; were
lunged in seas of mud and remained buried
nd imprisoned under the rocks, while other
ands, other chains of mountains, other conti-
ents were buried under the immense pressure
f the floods. Where the poles had been, ap-
eared the equator; and the lands beneath the
quator were driven to the poles; or, rather,
here were at that time neither poles nor equa-
or but an almost infinite mass of dead matter,
ark and inert. We speak of the most im-
ense catastrophe that ever befell the universe,

for it was the shattering and destruction of a portion of it. The entire solar system was plunged into chaos.

I speak of the solar system, not the stellar system, for in the Scriptures we read that Satan fell to earth from the heaven of the stars. This heaven remained intact and did not suffer at all. I have shown in another place that in the center of the stars there are very many centers of gravity, or centers of stars which are continually changing place according to laws unknown to us, and these stellar centers are entirely independent one of the other. Besides this, the earth, according to the true conception of the ancients, did not comprehend our planet only, but embraced also the sun, the moon and the planets. This is our world. The heaven of the stars, said the ancient Babylonians and Hebrews, had nothing to do with us, at least apparently. That it is really so is a certainty; at least it is admitted by all modern astronomers. Our earth, in fact, exists and lives under the influence of the sun, the moon, and perhaps the planets, as the Babylonians and astrologers of all times and countries have admitted; but the stars belong to other worlds, infinitely diverse, infinitely far off. For this reason also, the Babylonians, the Hebrews, and the ancient

Greeks had one name only for both fixed stars and planets, because they studied particularly the planets and not the fixed stars.

Thus all our creation suffered through the rebellion of the angels; and still suffers, waiting with earnest expectation "for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," so says Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (8:19-23). Satan then reduced the creation to servitude, and then, after the creation of man, the earth was again cursed by reason of sin (Gen. 3:17-19). Thus the revolt against God passed from heaven to earth; from the order of spirit to the order of matter—and this to show the wonderful unity and concatenation of all that is created.

I have reserved for the rest of this chapter two considerations of great weight, which I will expound as clearly as possible, to show that the theory which I defend is the only true one.

Peter in his Second Epistle writes: "For

this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pet. 3:5-7). These words of Peter are generally interpreted as alluding to the flood. But this is not the case. They describe the destruction of the earth which happened in *very ancient times (ekpalai),* or in the first times, which he places in contradistinction to the latter times, when the heavens, or our heaven and earth, will perish by fire in the day of judgment, thence to return once more to the beautiful heaven and earth of the primal creation. For Peter himself, together with Paul and John, exhorts us to look for new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness, after "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Pet. 3:12, 13). The time of the flood was not called by the apostles *ekpalai,* neither was it placed in contradistinction to the latter days. Besides, at the time of the flood the earth did not perish at all, for there is

no mention in the Bible either of earthquakes or volcanoes or other cataclysms then, but only of heavy rain, apparently without wind; moreover the earth after a few months of being flooded became once more habitable, therefore it was not entirely destroyed. The earth was destroyed and perished only at the beginning of the creation.

And not only did the earth perish, but Peter affirms categorically that the *world of that time* perished,—*ille tunc mundus,* as the Vulgate translates from the Greek words *"ho tote kosmos."* The cosmos of that time perished, or rather the solar system, the world, the universe, the heaven, all that in the Greek language is signified by the word *kosmos.* Let us also observe the wonderful structure of the words by which Peter describes the heavens and the earth which perished: "By the word of God," he says, "the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." These words describe exactly the heavens and the earth of the first creation. The earth still emerges from the water and subsists in water; the Vulgate translates *"terra, de aqua et per aqua consistens."* This last word comes from the Greek verb *sunistemi,* which means to place, consist, form, come from, be

born. The English Bible well translates these words: "standing out of the water and in the water." Is not this the most exact definition of our earth as it is at present? And are not the words of Peter the best comment on the first verse of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth?"

According to Peter, then, the world of that time perished. In what way did it perish? Submerged in the waters, replies Peter; and he used the Greek word *katakluzo,* which means to inundate, to flood, to submerge. The Vulgate translates *"mundus aqua inundatus periit."* The English Bible and all the translations: "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." These words describe the earth of the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis: the world which was overflowed with water and perished described by Peter is "the earth become desolate and chaotic and with darkness upon the face of the deep," described in Genesis. As has already been said, during the Biblical chaos the waters prevailed and wrapped the earth as in an ocean of darkness *(tehom):* and in the same way Peter tells us clearly that the earth perished on account of the water. The apostle, then, does not here speak of the flood, but of the immense cataclysm

in which in the beginning of time the world perished, or rather our heaven and our earth.

If another proof is necessary to show that this is the real meaning of the words of Peter, read what he writes with regard to the flood, in the second chapter of the same Epistle: "God spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." The world (Gr., *kosmos)* of the ungodly is used in the sense of humanity, or rather evil men.

Thus Peter teaches the doctrine of the general creation, in the first days, of heaven and earth in a state of perfection; he reminds us of the destruction of the cosmos, or our world, submerged beneath the waters; and he contrasts this primeval destruction with the last one, which will take place after the last judgment, only no longer by means of water but by means of fire. This is the true, the only true interpretation of the first verses of Genesis.

But that is not all. If some other proof were necessary to demonstrate this, the Holy Scriptures offer us one which admits of no refutation. It is an analogical proof, but the analogies of Scripture have the value of reality.

Material things are symbols, parables of the spiritual.

As material light signifies divine grace, order, and spiritual beauty, so darkness signifies sin, spiritual disorder, the bad angels, Satan. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness," said Jesus to the high priests and captains of the temple and the elders who had gone to arrest him. It was night then, and the material darkness signified that the evil spirits in that sad hour were triumphant. And later on, while Christ was dying on the cross, the earth was darkened, the sun being obscured (Luke 23), to manifest the eclipse which was momentarily suffered by the Sun of righteousness, and the temporary triumph of Lucifer. Genesis, which passes over in silence the rebellion of the angels and the destruction of the solar world caused by them, on the other hand described minutely the creation, the temptation, and the fall and redemption of the first human couple.

Adam and Eve were created in a state of grace; healthy, vigorous, beautiful, friends of God, one might say his guests, in the garden of delight. Satan tempted them, and they fell. Their sin was followed by the loss of the grace of God, the loss of the knowledge with which

they had been endowed by God, the loss of immortality, the loss of the earthly paradise, and they were condemned instead to toil, to the pains of child-birth, to servitude, to disease, and to death. The beautiful creation of God had become, like the primitive earth, empty of divine gifts, confused, disordered, a chaos of misery and death. But just as God, after chaos, pronounced the fateful words, "Let there be light," and there was light, so God, after the entrance of sin into the world, promised the two sinners a future Redeemer, thus restoring to grace human nature, deformed and corrupted by sin.

The analogy between the material creation, the destruction and consequent material reconstruction of our world, and the creation, spiritual fall, and subsequent restoration of the first human couple, is complete. The first is the symbol of the second, and the latter throws a flood of light on the former. The light which illumined the darkness of the primitive chaos is a type of Christ the Light that shines in the darkness and lightens every man that comes into the world as the slave of Satan, oppressed by darkness. There are also to be considered the words of the apostle John, that disciple who had drunk at the fountain of wisdom itself,—

the words with which he begins his Gospel. These are evidently based upon the words in the beginning of Genesis. There the material creation is referred to; here the spiritual creation. There the universe comes into existence by means of the Word; here the new creature enters upon a new life through the grace of Christ. There the dark ocean, the abyss, the "*tehom*" which oppresses the primitive creation; here, the light which is Christ, who shines in the darkness, and who fights against the darkness, because it will not receive him. The abyss, the *tehom* of the primitive creation, is the dragon of the chaos, the "*Tiamat*" of the Babylonians, Satan; the darkness spoken of by John, which refuses to depart at the command of the Light, is the Devil, that old serpent who seduced the first man in the earthly paradise. But the victory remains with the stronger, that is, with the Infinite God. Our solar world, ruined by Lucifer, was reconstructed in six days; the human generation, led astray by the Devil, is saved by Christ. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The analogy of the first chapter of the Gospel of John with

ıe first verses of Genesis is complete. The eader will understand this better when he has ead the following chapters.

IV

REVOLT OF ANGELS AND PERIOD OF CHAOS, IN OTHER ANCIENT DOCUMENTS

THE revolt of the angels in heaven against God, their expulsion from the abode of bliss, and their fall upon the earth, is not a myth, a legend, a parable. It is a fact, although not linked to humanity. It is attested by the Old and New Testaments, by the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, by John, and above all by our Lord Jesus Christ. But there are other witnesses to this fact; they are of great importance, and it will not do to pass them over in silence.

The first of these is the holy patriarch Enoch, the seventh from Adam, son of Jared and father of Methuselah. This patriarch enjoyed great fame in ancient times, when it was believed that authentic writings from his hands were available. A few years ago a book was discovered, the book of Enoch, which, having been well known and highly esteemed in the early days of Christianity, had later on been lost sight of, and finally utterly forgotten.

Some believe that the redaction or compilation of this book, now in Greek, may be traced to a few centuries before Christ; and that its original was Hebrew, not Syriac or Greek.

Now a book of Enoch was explicitly quoted as Scripture by all the writers of the New Testament, beginning from Jude, James' brother, who records a sentence of Enoch in his Epistle. Phrases of, or allusions to, the same book are found in the Epistles of Peter, James, John, Paul, in Revelation, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the four Gospels, none excepted. It is evident that Enoch's book was held in high esteem and enjoyed a great reputation with those inspired writers; in fact, Tertullian states that in his days Enoch's book was generally believed to be inspired. The same opinion was entertained by the writer of the so-called letter of Barnabas, by Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and many others. The Jews rejected it because, as Tertullian says, Enoch too clearly foretold the first and second advents of the Messiah.

Among other admirable prophecies contained in that book, there is one intimately connected with our subject. It is a vision, which is found in Section IV, Paragraph 83 of the book, where

the holy patriarch imparts instructions and admonitions to the members of his family. "And now, my son Methuselah, I will show thee all my visions which I have seen, recounting them before thee. Two visions I saw before I took a wife, and the one was quite unlike the other; on the first occasion when I was learning to write, on the second, before I took thy mother, I saw a terrible vision, and concerning them I prayed to the Lord. I had laid me down in the house of my grandfather Mahalaleel, when I saw in a vision how the heaven collapsed, and was borne off and fell to the earth. And when it fell to the earth, I saw how the earth was swallowed up in a great abyss, and mountains hung suspended on mountains, and hills sank down on hills, and high trees were rent from the stems and hurled down and sunk in the abyss. And thereupon utterance came into my mouth, and I lifted up my voice to cry aloud, and said: the earth is destroyed!" (Charles, R. H., The Book of Enoch, Oxford, 1893.)

When we read this vision of Enoch, it is impossible not to think of the great catastrophe that followed the rebellion and fall of the wicked angels; a revolt which, having been revealed by God to the first men, made such an impression on them as to cause them to hand it

down to their distant descendants, who, in their turn, recorded it in their poems and books, some of which have come down to us. It will not be thought amiss to mention a few of them.

First, as to antiquity, comes the already quoted Babylonian Poem on Creation, written not many years after Noah's death. This poem, called the Poem of Creation, ought rather to be called the poem of the revolt of the dragon of chaos, or demons, against the gods of order, because such it really is. In many things it so closely follows the Bible that the reader is often amazed. But that is not all. When we read at the end of the poem the strange description of the imprisonment, torments, death and resurrection of Bel-Marduk, creator of heaven and earth, we are inclined to ask how could the Babylonians, 2,000 years before Christ, conceive and write such a poem, which is a clear anticipation of Christ's sufferings, death and resurrection. The only plausible answer is that the Babylonians recounted, concerning the primitive revolt of the angels and subsequent destruction of the earth, the tradition received from the just Noah and his children, the former having been dead a few years only, the latter still living. As to the passion, death and resurrection of Bel-Merodach (also spelled Marduk),

they derived it from the book of Enoch. The Babylonian Poem of Creation is divided into six books, of which I give the summary. The translation is the recent one by Dr. S. Langdon (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1923).

It will not be out of place to record what Genesis says about the foundation of Babylon. The epic was undoubtedly written in the period of the first Babylonian dynasty, 2225-1926 B. C. Some years before, Nimrod had laid the foundation of the Babylonian monarchy. It must have been the year 2234 B. C. "And Cush," says the Bible, "begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar" (Gen. 10: 8-10). I need not bring to the mind of the reader that Cush, Nimrod's father, was Ham's son.

In the beginning, says the poem, only Apsu, the fresh water ocean (male) and Tiamat, the salt water ocean (female), existed. They were mingled in one. Together with these two, another dragon is described in the poem, which is called Mummu (mind, word), and acts as Apsu's messenger. Apparently, the first rebel-

lion of the angels has already taken place: here the poem describes the resistance which the dragons of chaos, or cosmic disorder, opposed to God, who wanted to reduce it to order and expel the dragons from it. Apsu, Tiamat, and Mummu are the dragons, i. e., the demons of chaos; the poem even describes them as chaos itself,—disorderly, confused, dark. These monsters of chaos engender Lahmu and Lahamu, and after many ages, Ansar (Assur) and Kisar make their appearance on the scene of the great epic. Ansar and Kisar are the first of the gods of order; they engender Anu the heaven-god and Ea the water-god. It must be observed here that these two gods are respectively called gods of heaven and of water by anticipation, because, in the beginning, there was no heaven; and as to water, only the two oceans, personified by Apsu and Tiamat, existed. The heaven and the waters above the heaven, i. e., Anu and Ea, appeared in their special characters only after the war of the dragons against the gods of order and their final defeat. The analogy between Genesis (which speaks of the firmament, and of gathering the waters that are under the heaven unto one place, only when darkness is defeated and expelled from chaos),

and this part of the Babylonian poem, could not be more evident.

The poem proceeds to describe how the gods of order, wishing to put order into chaos, find a natural resistance on the part of the dragons of chaos, which accordingly repulse them. It is the beginning of the war which forms the subject matter of the poem. War is practically declared between the monsters of chaos and the gods of order. The Babylonian epic is highly mythical and fanciful, but the Biblical tradition is still perceptible under the veils of mythological allegory. Apsu declares to Tiamat his wish to destroy the gods; Tiamat contradicts, is enraged, and seeks advice from Mummu, who urges Apsu to execute his plan. A few of the gods of order are frightened at the coming war and bewail their fate; but Ea encourages them, and, to show them his prowess, advances against Apsu and Mummu, casts a spell upon them and slays them. Apsu being destroyed, Ea makes Apsu (the sweet water ocean) his abode, and thus he becomes the god of sweet waters. Immediately after this, Anu, the heaven-god, appears on the scene.

Meanwhile, either to Ea or Ansar, a child is born, to whom is given the name of Merodach (Marduk). Here the poem describes the birth

of Marduk, who is to be the protagonist of the poem.

One of Tiamat's attendants reports to her the death of Apsu and of Mummu. He urges her to revenge her husband and create monsters to help her in the combat. Description of eleven monsters or dragons of chaos. Nine are named. They all bear names of wild and ferocious animals. Tiamat chooses one of them to be her lord and king over the chaos, and so Kingu is exalted over the powers of chaos and receives the tablet of fate. Tiamat prepares for battle. Ea discovers the plot and reports to Ansar (Assur), who, being terrified, appeals to Ea and begs him to use his curse against Tiamat as he had done against Apsu. But Ea is powerless before Tiamat. Ea went up indeed against Tiamat and her dragons, but he was defeated and fled. Ansar, in turn, appeals to Anu the heaven-god. Anu obeys his father, and goes up to meet Tiamat; but he likewise retreats in terror. But Ansar remembers the prowess of Marduk, and so his confidence revives.

Ea summons his son Marduk into the presence of Ansar, who asks him to fight Tiamat, foretelling at the same time his victory. Marduk accepts the perilous honor, but he asks to be first promoted to the rank of a great god,

as a reward for his labors and valor. The gods of order consent to all Marduk demands; and so he is added to the sacred assembly of the highest gods. He receives the power of declaring fates and the mystic attributes of a great deity, by possessing the word of fate and the power to declare it. He receives the scepter and the weapons of battle, works miracles, and forthwith proceeds against Tiamat.

The poem describes the gigantic battle. Tiamat and her host of giants and monsters is defeated and slain. Kingu, Tiamat's second husband and king of chaos, together with his monsters, is bound and hurled down into the nether-world. The gods of order, naturally enough, assist Marduk in the battle; Marduk divides the body of Tiamat (chaos is in the Hebrew, *Tehom),* and constructs out of it heaven, earth, and the nether-sea, in which he fixes the respective abodes of the three gods of order, Anu, Enlil, and Ea.

Book V deals with astronomical theories on the movements of the planets along the ecliptic, the motions of the moon and the positions of the signs of the Zodiac, as constructed by Marduk. This part of the text is incomplete.

Book VI is ushered in with the creation of man. Marduk assembles the gods of order,

and commands that Kingu, who lies in confinement in the under-world, be taken out and made to appear before them. Ea slays him, and this god or Marduk, it is not certain which of the two, creates man from the blood of Kingu. Man, it is there distinctly said, was created to honor the gods in worship and serve them. The gods, as a token of gratitude toward Marduk, decide to build a great shrine on earth to his honor, where they may all assemble. Marduk rejoices at that public recognition of his bravery, and decides to build Babylon and its temple Esagila. The gods build the city and its great temple in honor of Marduk.

Afterward the gods arrange the laws of the universe and distribute the power over it amongst themselves. Marduk lays down his weapons before them. Anu gives a name to Marduk's bow, and fixes it in heaven as Canis Major. Moreover, Anu defines the powers of Marduk: the latter shall be the ruler of mankind and charged with the care of temples and sacrifices. Babylon is a pattern of the constellations of Cetus and Aries. The gods give Marduk fifty titles of honor; then they sing a hymn in honor of Marduk.

Thus closes this singular Babylonian Poem of Creation, which, as the attentive reader must

have seen, is a living witness to the truth of the revolt of the angels against God, their subsequent defeat, followed by the destruction of the earth. Chaos is there described as in the Bible; the nature and cause of the same is clearly defined. Tiamat is the same word as *Tehom,* the Hebrew word for chaos. Apsu, Mummu, Tiamat, and the other monsters of chaos are dreadful demons, gods of disorder, enemies to Ansar, Anu, and Ea, gods of order. Even to-day, in the East, Tiamat is the name commonly given to a dreadful devil who is peculiarly obnoxious to men, and whom pagan, Mohammedan, as well as superstitious Christian natives believe to have been an angel of God, hurled down from heaven by God on account of his iniquity.

Marduk, having killed Tiamat, builds up with her body the heaven, the earth, and the nether-ocean,—i. e., almost certainly Hades or Sheol. As we may see, this is not creation out of nothing. Everything is created out of chaos, which is the very personification of the Evil Power, of Satan. The six Biblical days of the creation or of the reconstruction of the universe are not mentioned in this poem; but they are quite distinctly recorded in other clay tablets, come down to us.

The description of the creation is far removed from the simplicity and mysterious dignity of the Bible; but it is not without a deep significance that man also is created out of chaos and contains in himself an element of evil and disorder, namely the blood of Kingu, king and dragon of chaos.

The Babylonian poem is a clear confirmation of the interpretation of the first verses of Genesis that we are considering. God created the heavens and the earth in a state of perfection, beauty, and loveliness. The angels rebelled against God, and after their fall, not being able to vent upon God their spite, malice and fury, falling headlong from heaven upon the earth they destroyed, reduced to a dark chaos, the heaven of the sun and planets and the earth itself. The poem here and there varies from the Biblical facts, but it narrates them all, or alludes to them. It is easily understood that the poetical ornaments of the poem, the grotesque amplifications, the polytheistic personifications, the fantastic pictures did not exist in the old tradition. They were superimposed later by the poet or poets who wrote the epic.

In this poem, and in other tablets interpreted by Dr. George Smith, the revolt of angels against God is narrated almost in the same

terms used by John in the Revelation. It is even said that "the angels fell from heaven as lightning," that "they first reached the abyss of waters," that "they threw themselves down upon the earth, which they devastated as a torrent"; "they fell upon the earth as a storm." "They suddenly appeared before the light of the god Sin." The god Sin is none other than the sun. It is said elsewhere that "the angels, falling down from heaven, obscured the sun and the moon" and "unchained in the air the fury of appalling storms" (George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, pages 396-398).

In view of these Babylonian discoveries, our interpretation of the first verses of Genesis harmonizes in a remarkable way the words of Christ, those of the apostles, the vision of Enoch, and the ancient Babylonian documents.

The apostles have been mentioned. Here is what Jude, James' brother, writes in his general Epistle: "And the angels which kept not their first estate [or dignity, condition], but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (v. 6). The first estate or dignity of the fallen angels was their primitive innocence and spontaneous submission to God. Their first habitation was heaven; so

their fall from heaven to earth, nay, to the abode of misery and of darkness, is here affirmed explicitly. And so also Peter: "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. 2:4). The same is affirmed more briefly, or alluded to, in several passages by Paul.

We have seen the significance of the Babylonian documents, newly translated by Dr. Langdon. But those early traditions do not stand alone. The ancient Brahmins also believed the same thing. The Brahmins teach even at present that in an epoch indefinitely distant from us, which they call *yuga,* the world was entirely destroyed; and this cosmic destruction has nothing to do with the tradition of the deluge, of which likewise they have a most vivid record. They also expect another such destruction of the world at the end of this present age, called by them *Kali Yuga,* named from the goddess Kali, the symbol of crime, of degeneracy, of decadence and immorality.

Their Vedas distinctly teach the theory which we are setting forth. Chaos is represented by those most ancient Vedic poets as a personification of Vritra, an infernal dragon, a cosmic being, who not only guards and defends the

dark and mysterious waters of chaos, but himself is chaos. In fact, one of the Vedic poets says: "There was darkness in chaos; there was a vault which hid the dark waters; there was a mountain of waters in the interior of Vritra's caverns." "But Indra took the thunderbolt, killed the dragon, and thus the seven rivers (Punjab) began freely to flow." As Vritra corresponds to the Babylonian Tiamat, so Indra is the counterpart of Marduk. The Vedic poets expressly call Vritra "the enemy of God, a mysterious and wicked being, who undertook a great war against the gods in order to conquer for himself the kingdom of light, i. e., heaven. This dragon Vritra was followed by thousands and thousands of monsters."

Nor was this tradition of the revolt of the angels against God limited to the nations that lived in the East. It is remarkable that even in the Scandinavian mythology we find a trace of that distant event. In the Scandinavian Edda it is related how once the earth, the sun, and the moon were utterly destroyed, and the sun rose where now it sets. The following are fragments of the prophecies of the Vala, drawn from the Edda: "I remember," says the sybil, "nine worlds and nine heavens. Before the sons of

Bor [the gods] raised the globes, they who created the gleaming Midgaard, the sun shone in the South. In the East was seated the old woman in the forest of iron [the polar ices]. The sun is covered with clouds, the earth sinks in the sea, the shining stars disappear from the heavens, clouds of smoke envelop the all-nourishing tree, lofty flames mount even to heaven, the sea rears itself violently toward the skies and passes over the lands. Neither earth nor sun exists any longer, the air is overcome by glittering streams . . . she [the sybil] for the second time sees the earth, covered with verdure, rise from the sea."

This remarkable vision of the sybil is a duplicate of Enoch's vision. The geologist Klee believes that the Scandinavian sybil relates in this passage how the earth once broke its axis, thus causing that catastrophe which is here described. He thinks that this Scandinavian tradition was derived from the Egyptian priests, who clearly taught that once the sun rose where now it sets, and that the earth was utterly destroyed. Be this as it may, the fact is that such a tradition is found in the ancient writings of all nations. Some scholars confuse this tradition with that of the deluge, but wrongly; the two stand far apart. The earth was not

destroyed by the deluge. This latter catastrophe happened within historical times; man did not witness the former. God revealed it to man, that he might fear and defend himself against Satan, the great enemy of God.

V

THE DRAGONS OF CHAOS IN THE BIBLE

THE identification of chaos with the dragons or devils who guard and possess it is not a distinctive characteristic of Babylonian and Vedic mythology. It is found in the Bible. The Psalms, Job, Isaiah, and Ezekiel describe three monsters, respectively called Rahab, Behemoth, and Leviathan, which possess, more or less, the characteristics of the dragons of chaos. "It is enough to admit," says Professor Minocchi, "that Rahab was the name which the Hebrews gave to a poetic creation analogous to the Babylonian Tiamat, to be immediately struck with the undeniable parallelism of the two series of expressions referring to the creation of the world. Rahab is undoubtedly the Babylonian Tiamat." In Psalm 74: 12-17, the monster is called Leviathan. Leviathan, etymologically, means "the crooked dragon" (Salvatore Minocchi, La Genesi).

These three monsters continually appear in the Old Testament. The Psalms and Prophets are full of them. Gesenius says that "under

the name of Leviathan, the Bible meant any large monster, living in water, as the large sea-monsters, the crocodiles, the pythons, or still better the colossal serpents and monsters of the desert. Rahab has, more or less, the same meaning. Behemoth, on the contrary, is often taken for a hippopotamus or an elephant." Gesenius, however, adds that "the Bible constantly gives to these monsters an allegorical meaning, i. e., it considers them as personifications *of the principle of destruction*." This observation by Gesenius deserves consideration. Rahab, Behemoth and Leviathan are not three huge animals, but three horrible demons, three angels of destruction, three dragons of chaos. They are rightly called angels of destruction because they destroyed the earth. Keeping this interpretation before one, the passages in the Psalms, Job, and the Prophets, where their names occur, are very clear; when, on the contrary, they are taken merely for animals, or when they are supposed to be exclusively symbols of wicked kings, enemies of Israel, then their real significance is obscured and the Biblical passages have no meaning. One may admit, of course, that those animals often represent the Pharaoh of Egypt or the King of Syria; but when they mean that, the

inspired writer takes great care to inform the reader of it, and he can therefore discriminate the latter from the former usage.

To cite a few of these passages. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord," exclaims Isaiah, "awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?" (Isa. 51:9).

"In that day," says the prophet elsewhere, "the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that [is] in the sea" (Isa. 27:1). The Leviathan was in the sea. Rahab as well as Leviathan are always recorded in connection with waters, with the sea and chaos.

And in Psalm 89:8-11: "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?.... Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them. Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm. The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them." Rahab here clearly means Satan, the chief and

leader of the rebellious angels; and the enemies of God mentioned in this Psalm are not men, but the followers of Satan. Often Bible commentators apply the passage just quoted to the departure of the Children of Israel from Egypt, and to the miracles wrought by God through Moses on that memorable occasion; but this is not the true meaning of the passage. From verses 5 to 13 all that is said refers to the creation of the heavens and the earth by the Almighty; not a word is said about Egypt or the Exodus. There is no reason why the sacred poet, interrupting the natural flow of the passage, should interpose the story of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt.

This is still more manifest in Psalm 74:12-17: "For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength; thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness. Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers. The day is thine; the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter." If we meditate on this

passage, we shall not fail to see that the Psalmist identifies leviathan, or the Biblical crooked dragon, with the sea,—i. e., with primitive chaos. The Septuagint Greek interpreters translate verse 12, "But God is my king before all centuries," *ante saecula.* No word here about the Exodus from Egypt. The wonders mentioned took place before all centuries: *ante saecula;* i. e., when God created the heavens and the earth. But before proceeding to the creation of the heavens and of the earth, God was obliged to restrain within the sea, to break the heads of the dragons in the waters, to break the leviathan. In Hebrew the word to break is always represented by the same verb: to break, to weaken, to restrain, to render powerless, to kill.

It is said here that the leviathan has been given to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness. What does the Psalmist mean by "the people inhabiting the desert?" In the language of the Bible, the desert is the abode of monsters, of wild animals, of pythons and dragons, symbolizing the mysterious forces of evil, the angels of destruction,—i. e., the devils. The devils live in the desert; Jesus himself confirmed with his divine authority this belief, when he said: "When the unclean spirit is

gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first" (Matt. 12:43-46; Luke 11:24-26). And thus Satan (leviathan) was condemned to be among his own people in the wilderness.

The Bible confirms the Babylonian Poem of Creation, and this, in its way, throws light on the Bible. But that is not all. In the Psalm quoted there is a clear allusion to the manner whereby God broke down the power of leviathan, the dragon of chaos. "God," says the Psalm, "worked a salvation in the midst of the earth." In what did this salvation consist? It is explained in the verses that follow: "God divided the sea by his strength," i. e., he divided it into two, setting free the sweet waters that, through Satanic agency, had mingled themselves with the salt waters of the sea. The sweet waters went back to their place above the sky; the dry appeared, i. e., the earth; and with this, rivers and fountains overflowed and

perennial rivers dried up. The day and the night came, because, the sun and the moon being set free from the waters which kept them submerged in the waters, they illumined with their light the whole earth. The points of comparison between Psalm 74 and the Babylonian Poem of Creation are many and evident.

But there is in the Bible another passage which, unfortunately, has been wrongly interpreted; whereas, when read in the light of our interpretation, it could not be more clear and intelligible. The passage is in Job 40:6 to 41:34, and concerns the two Biblical monsters Behemoth and Leviathan. The quotation is too long to be cited in its entirety, hence a short analysis of it may suffice. God wishes to show Job that He alone is Strong, Infinite, Almighty, in order that in His presence all flesh should tremble, and humble itself, and that no man should be presumptuous about his own powers. The arguments used by God to prove all this are progressive. The wonders of creation show the strength, the power, the infinite majesty of God; but the climax is reached when God affirms that he has broken down, humbled, and tamed Behemoth, that huge monster, similar to the elephant and hippopotamus, endowed with an almost infinite pride and strength.

"Behemoth is the beginning of the creations of God," as the Septuagint interpreters with the Vulgate translate *"Ipse est principium viarum Dei"*; and only He who has made him can approach him with His sword (v. 19).

Behemoth, which in Chapter 40 is a kind of elephant or hippopotamus, in the following chapter becomes the leviathan and is described as a python or dragon. No one, save God alone, can tame him. Only the Almighty draws him out of the waters with a hook, puts a hook into his nose, and bores his jaws with a thorn. Only the Almighty plays with him as with a bird and binds him at His pleasure. And yet this monster is terrifyingly strong and immensely to be feared. Leviathan "maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride." This description perfectly fits Satan, "the beginning of God's creations," "a king over all the children of pride," not a monstrous animal Rahab, Behemoth, or Leviathan.

Are not these monsters the Biblical counterparts of the dragons of chaos described by the

Babylonian Poem of Creation? The writer has no doubt of it, and it would seem that no reasonable doubt can be entertained by careful and attentive readers of the passage in Job. Rahab, Behemoth, and Leviathan are not fantastic monsters or fanciful creations of an Oriental poet. They are likened to the strongest animals of the earth, of the desert, and of the sea in order to make us understand how courageous, strong, powerful and fierce they are; but these mysterious being are far from being animals. They are spirits, wicked spirits who through sin have so debased themselves as to have degenerated from pure, immortal, exalted spirits into strong, fearful, and ferocious animals. As is the case with man, so with the angels of God. Man, the friend of God, is Godlike: good, meek, gentle, lovely. When debased and corrupted through vice he becomes an animal, often a strong, wild, and hideous animal. His better and higher nature disappears; nothing remains of him but the dirt, the loathesomeness, the ugliness of sin. So it was with Satan and his rebellious angels. They were once the friends of God, and his most exalted spirits; now they are his enemies,—powerful, repulsive, frightful beasts, the monsters and dragons of chaos.

This is confirmed by another passage of Job.

In Chapter 26 Job, answering his friend Bildad, praises God and exalts the greatness of the Almighty, manifested especially in the work of creation. Bildad had affirmed that "Dominion and fear are with him [God], he maketh peace in his high places. Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise? How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?" (Job 25:1-6). Bildad clearly alludes to the war that took place in the high places, i. e., in heaven; to the multitude of God's armies; to the sin of the angels; and he affirms that none is pure in the sight of God. Job answers that Bildad does not teach an ignoramus. He also knows that "dead things are formed [by God] from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath com-

passed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud [Septuagint, Rahab]. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" (26:1-14).

It is evident that Job speaks here of the creation of the heavens and of the earth in a manner analogous to the Babylonian Poem of Creation. The *dead things* which God forms, or better draws from under the waters, are the ruins, the debris, the broken pieces of the primitive creation; the inhabitants of the waters are the sea-monsters which God expels from chaos. Hell (Heb., *Sheol*) of verse 6 is identical with chaos or destruction, over which God exercises complete mastery and domination. The earth comes out of chaos (v. 7) and separates it from the waters above, which he binds up in the clouds. He divides the sea with his power and compasses the waters with bounds; but before doing this he must smite through the proud (or Rahab), bring the pillars of heaven low, and

make them tremble. "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof . . . his hand hath formed the crooked serpent." But once upon a time Rahab, the crooked serpent, was an angel of light. He was an ornament of heaven in the days when God by His Spirit garnished the heavens. Job's book, one of the most ancient of the Bible, very clearly confirms the Babylonian poem, the dragons of chaos, the reconstruction of the earth, destroyed through the envy and malice of Behemoth, Rahab, and Leviathan. The sacred book mentions likewise the night and the day,—i. e., how God worked in order to undo the works of the proud, yea, of the king over all the children of pride.

I might quote other ancient documents from the Egyptians, the Etruscans, and the Greeks. All these ancient peoples confirm the theory which has been set forth. Those who are familiar with the Greek, Latin, Italian and English poets can bring to mind what Hesiod, Eschilus, Ovid, Dante, Milton and others wrote on this subject. The twelve Titans, born in heaven and of semi-divine descent, rose in rebellion against Jupiter, whom they wanted to expel from his throne in order to occupy his place in heaven. They were defeated, and, hav-

ing been hurled down from heaven, fell into Tartarus or hell. The Greeks and the Etruscans, no less than the Bible and the Babylonian poem, taught that Erebus and Night came out of chaos. Erebus is a synonym of darkness, and is often assumed as being identical with Sheol or Hades. We therefore possess a complete and uninterrupted tradition of the history of the primitive creation of the heaven and earth and their subsequent destruction by the arch-enemy of God. But this tradition is in the Bible recorded in a sober and concise manner, and is purely monotheistic; whereas in the sacred books of the nations the same tradition is altered, enlarged, exaggerated, tainted with mythological and polytheistic elements, and perverted. But the principal Biblical facts are still discernible under a cloud of mythological amplifications.

To sum up in a few words what has been said: Satan and his angels destroyed our solar system, and reduced the sun, the moon, the planets, and the earth to a confused and a shapeless mass of *dead things,* as Job says; or to chaos, as the Bible and other Oriental documents have it. This Tiamat, corresponding to the Biblical Tehom, was all that remained of our solar system after the destruction wrought

by the infuriated angels. These fiery demons, or dragons, sat as victors on the mighty ruins of our world till they were dislodged by the power of the Almighty. How long did the dragons of chaos sit, undisputed masters, over the ruins of our world? The Bible does not tell us. They kept chaos in their power until the Spirit of God began to move upon the dark waters of the abyss. When God said, "Let there be light," the dragons of chaos began to retreat before the advancing host of heaven. The colossal ruins of our world began to feel the power of the Almighty God, and to regain their old place in the great fabric of the universe. To guilt, to sin, to crime, symbolized by dark chaos, God's mercy, symbolized by light, was suddenly substituted. God began to undo the works of the Devil, as John says. "He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth *from the beginning.* For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy [Greek, undo] the works of the Devil" (1 John 3:8). The Devil sinneth from the beginning. From the beginning of what? Evidently from the beginning of creation. His revolt against God was his sin; there was, at that time, no man to tempt and seduce. The Son of God was manifested that he might

undo the works of the Devil. The Son of God, the Word of God, reconstructed the earth which Satan had destroyed. John says that the Son of God was manifested; he does not say that the Son of God was manifested *in the flesh*. This is the constant work of God, "to undo the works of the Devil." The Son of God is the Word of God; and the Word is Light, and "the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended [lit., laid not hold of it] it not." The Light "was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not (John's Gospel, Chapter I).

As we have seen, the first day of creation, as told in Genesis, begins with darkness, because spiritual darkness, i. e., the evil forces of the spiritual world, are in possession of chaos; wherefore the inspired writer repeats concerning every day, "And the evening and the morning were the first, . . . second, . . . third . . . sixth day." First darkness, then light; first night, then day. All the human races in the world have always commenced the day from the evening, from the setting of the sun, from darkness; and it is a singular fact that, since the middle ages, men have increasingly retarded the beginning of the day. Now they begin it at midnight,—i. e., when darkness is at

its height. Is this a symbol of the much vaunted progress of humanity? Is light or darkness on the increase? God, on the contrary, began his reconstruction of the earth by ordering that light should appear, because he created everything by his Co-eternal Word, who is Uncreated Light. By that light God created the morning stars, the angels, who, as long as they remained friends of God, were also light; afterward, having rebelled against God who had created them out of nothing, they became evening, yea, night, until God said, "Let there be light," and, the dragons of chaos being expelled, light suddently appeared. Thus the creation of the physical universe became a symbol of the spiritual universe, in which angels and men are evening and dark night until God says, "Let there be light!" and with the light of his face illumines the darkness of their minds and softens the hardness of their hearts!

VI

THE MYSTERY OF THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL

FOLLOWING the real and truest Biblical symbolism, the ancient Christian writers used to divide the history of humanity into six periods, corresponding to the six days of creation.

The first period or day was reckoned from Adam to Noah. The evening of that day was symbolized by Adam's sin; the morning by the promise of a Redeemer and by Adam's repentance.

The second day is measured from Noah to Abraham. Its evening is the terrible corruption that preceded the deluge and the catastrophe of humanity; the day is the faith of Noah and of his children.

The third runs from Abraham to David. The idolatry into which all humanity, even Abraham's family, had fallen is the evening of that day; its morning is Abraham's vocation and faith, his holiness and the righteousness of his children.

The fourth day begins with David and ends

at the Babylonian captivity. The evening of that day was the rejection, on the part of the people of Israel, of theocratic government, i. e., of God, and the unrighteous and sanguinary reign of Saul; the morning of the fourth day was David's election and consecration, chosen by God to be king over Israel, his faith and devotion to God and the glories of David's kingdom.

The fifth day is computed from the Babylonian captivity to Christ's first advent. The evening of that day was ushered in by the general idolatry and corruption of morals which not only had become general in the world, but had also deeply permeated the ranks of the Chosen People; that blessed morning saw Christ's first advent, the mystery of his holy incarnation, his most holy life, his glorious message of love, peace and redemption, his passion, death and resurrection. Never shone upon earth a more glorious morning!

The sixth day is reckoned from the first to the second advent of the Lord. We are now in the evening of that glorious day. But alas! It is dark, it is somber, it is nearly night! We witness the general decadence of Christianity; we see real, living faith in Christ disappearing from the face of the earth, and a dark chaos of

errors, iniquities and human disorders taking gradual possession of the whole world. The days have come about which Christ said: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The morning which true believers wait for in faith, hope and love is Christ's second advent, when he will come back to earth to establish his blessed kingdom in peace, justice and holiness. Let Thy kingdom come!

In any consideration of the subject that we are discussing, we are faced by a difficulty which has troubled countless numbers of thoughtful people. How could God permit one of his creatures, Lucifer, Satan, to destroy a part of the universe which He had created? Why did God not forestall the Devil's plan and restrain him, either by making him change his mind, or by destroying or annihilating him? This difficulty, it cannot be denied, is a serious and weighty one.

The Bible represents Satan as the first, or one of the first, amid the creations of God; and as such, it describes him as a most strong, most powerful, most intelligent being, capable of almost any great and exalted exploit. It is not by chance that we have considered at length the two chapters of Job where the two monsters

Behemoth and Leviathan are described. These two powerful animals symbolize the "King of all the children of pride," Lucifer or Satan. The Chief of the rebel angels is almost omnipotent. No created being can equal him in ingenuity, strength and boldness; only God can restrain him.

And here we see the difference between Bible truth and the polytheism of the Gentile books. According to the sacred books of the ancient Persians there exist two gods, equal to each other in power; Ahura-Mazda, the creator of heaven and earth, the maker of man, the good god who created the light; and Auro Maniyus, the rival and enemy of Ahura-Mazda, the god of darkness and of evil, creator of the evil spirits, the seducer of man and the destroyer of all that is good and beautiful. These two gods are so equal in every respect that one never gains a complete victory over the other; they are both all-powerful, and the work of one follows upon that of the other as day and night, light and darkness. It is not so in the Bible; only one God exists, and Satan is a creature of God: even Satan is subject to God.

How, then, does God permit the existence of a creature at the same time so evil and so strong? Here would seem to be the reply:

God, having decided to create spiritual beings, created them like himself in important respects,—for the artist gives forth the ideas and creations of his own mind. But God is a perfectly free Being; indeed he is the fount of all freedom. Therefore the angels created by him were endowed with liberty. Now it is the property of liberty to do either good or ill; to choose obedience to the law or rebellion against it; to serve the Creator voluntarily, or to refuse him the service due him. It is in this rebellion of the spirit against the law under which every creature is born, that sin consists. Every being endowed with liberty may sin. The angels sinned. Satan sinned; he, the highest of the angelic beings, perhaps the first of the creatures of God, became the most bitter enemy of God, the rival of God. In sinning he dragged into the same downfall millions of angels who were thus suddenly transformed from creatures of light into creatures of darkness, from good angels into evil demons.

After the sin of the angels, what could God do? Three ways, certainly, were open to the Infinite Lord of the universe; either to convert them by force, to annihilate them, or to repair the harm that they do.

The first way is impossible and absurd, be-

cause it implies contradiction. A conversion, to be really such, must be free, voluntary. God would not, then, constrain Satan and his angels to change their perverse will and repent of their sins and be converted.

But neither would God annihilate them. We know that God never blots out anything that he has created. The law of the conservation of energy and of the indestructibility of matter and of force manifests to us the divine plan in the universe. No force is ever destroyed; no atom of matter is ever annihilated. An angel is not a material being; he is a spiritual being, and therefore cannot undergo physical change, only a spiritual one. If therefore God would not constrain Satan and his followers to be converted by force; if he would not blot them out because that is contrary to his infinite goodness, nothing remained but to repair the harm done by the evil spirits. And it is that that God has always done and still constantly does.

Hardly had Satan destroyed the primitive creation than God reconstructed it anew. Hardly had Satan seduced the first man and ruined the first human couple, than God intervened to save the human species, promising them a Redeemer who, as John says, "was manifested, that he might destroy the works of

the Devil" (1 John 3:8). Observe the words of John: "He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil." The Devil sinneth from the beginning, *ap' arches ab initio.* From the beginning of what? Certainly from the beginning of primitive creation, for the sin of Adam and Eve was induced by the sin of Satan; but here John goes farther back than that, and clearly alludes to the first sin of Satan in his rebellion against God.

Satan, before he sinned, was the god, the prince of our world; the earth and the solar system belonged to Satan because God had given them to him. So Satan says to Jesus in person, and Jesus does not contradict him (Luke 4:6). Therefore Jesus in more places than one calls Satan the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30), and Paul calls him the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). What wonder, then, that Satan, having become rebellious and evil, revenged himself by destroying the first beautiful creation of God?

And does not stupid, brutal man act likewise? As God gave to Satan the care of our solar system, so God gave to Adam the care of the

earth, and lordship over it. What has sinful man done with it during the course of centuries? Has he not soaked it in blood, defiled it, devastated it? I appeal to all geologists, to the astrophysicists and historians of the earth. Five or six thousand years ago the earth, the whole earth, was a garden of delight, a paradise of God; and now through man's own fault it is reduced, for the greater part, to a desert. Between man and Satan there is only this difference, that whereas Satan convulsed the primitive earth with a sudden catastrophe, man has destroyed it, impoverished it, stripped it little by little, cutting down forests, killing animals, depriving it of its treasures and preventing the flow of waters, reducing it to a marsh or a desert.

I hope the reader will understand how God, though omnipotent as respects the liberty and autonomy of angels and men, in his infinite wisdom undoes the works of darkness, repairs the physical and moral harm done by man, and causes good to come out of evil.

The Bible calls Satan "King over all the children of pride" (Job 41:34). No better definition could be given of him. He fell from heaven through pride, and his pride is not yet humbled. He refuses to recognize that all that

he is proud of came from God, and that he, of himself, has nothing at all. This is Satan's sin. He wants to be the Eternal, the Absolute, the Almighty God. This explains his spite, his fury, his anger against God, who of course does not recognize his absurd claims. Satan destroyed the earth; and later on, when man was created, he caused him to sin, and thus he substituted himself for God in the leadership and guidance of the then sinful humanity. From that day to the present there has been a kingdom of Satan on earth. Satan is the prince and god of this world. Cast out of heaven (Luke 10:18), he made earth and air the scene of his tireless activity. This present world-system, organized upon the principles of force, greed, selfishness, ambition and sinful pleasures is Satan's work and reign. This kingdom was the bribe which he offered to Christ and which the Lord refused.

But Satan's long warfare against God and man, which still continues, will come to an end when, being finally defeated by Christ, he will be cast into the lake of fire, his final doom. Thus, in the day of destruction, will Jehovah visit final and eternal judgment upon the wicked and their king.

VII

THE DIVINE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE, AND SCIENCE

IF TRUE believers knew science, and if scientists knew the Bible, there would be in the world more Christian faith and more true philosophy. For true faith is science,—but divine science, not human. It remains to be seen who it is that knows the universe better, whether the unbelieving scientist or the true Christian. Here, in a nutshell, is the question at issue.

Biblical Concordism, or the effort to reconcile the Bible and science, has utterly failed. The effort was made in good faith by Christian geologists, biologists, and astronomers, starting from the data of the sciences which they were teaching, to harmonize their sciences with the first chapters of Genesis. A vain labor! Their efforts brought no result whatever. They miserably failed, and one does not wonder; it was destined to be so. The reason is not far to seek. In the Bible there is no human science. In the Biblical narrative of the creation there

is no geology, no astrophysics, no chemistry, biology, botany, zoology; no human science of any sort is found here. It is a kind of desecration to introduce human science into the Bible; it is a sin to attempt to force it to say what it does not and will not say,—that is, to formulate scientific systems, which are as far from it as the East is from the West. There is no room in the Bible for any system of science. The creative symbols of the Biblical narrative are, indeed, so comprehensive that you may apparently force into them any scientific theory; but there is in them, at the same time, such an accurate order and definiteness that the men most qualified to judge find depths within depths, and laws within laws. These laws, these depths, spurn the ever-changing theories of men, and refuse to be beaten down into a supine acquiescence. The manner or wording of the divine narrative of the creation of heaven and earth is both mysterious and very simple.

Again, the Bible narrative has always seemed to be in opposition to the science of the day. But there are weighty reasons for this disagreement. Had the account of creation, as given in the Bible, accorded with the science propounded in Greece or Rome, or even with that taught by the schoolmen during the long period

of the Middle Ages, it would now be contemptuously rejected as utterly false. A revelation of only so much astronomy as was known to Copernicus would have seemed imperfect after the discoveries of Galileo and Newton; and a revelation of the science of Newton would have appeared defective to Laplace; a revelation of all the chemical knowledge of the eighteenth century would have been deficient in comparison with the information of the present day; just as what is now known in this and in other sciences will probably appear deficient, perhaps doubtful, or it may be absolutely wrong, before the termination of this present age.

It was, then, due to a divine purpose that the Biblical narrative has been clothed in such language that it stands alone, as at the first, amid a crowd of ever-changing opinions; it remains immutable amid ever-varying interpretations. The fact is, that the Hebrew narrative of creation not only, as has already been said, does not use scientific terms, but does not set forth any science at all. This must be insisted upon, because it is absolutely true. We must therefore, for the moment, dismiss science, and refer to the Biblical text alone for a solution of the mysteries involved in the divine narrative.

I have said that Biblical Concordism, tried

by Cuvier, Stoppani, Meighan, Vigouroux, Crossly, Adams, and many other scientists of Christian conviction, has utterly failed. Genesis, when read in the light of modern science, either has no meaning at all, or else must be rejected as fantastic, arbitrary, and scientifically baseless. The reason of this has been given. In Genesis there is no science whatever, as such; not even a scientific term; hence we must beware lest we lend to it our preconceived scientific ideas and read into it our philosophic systems. Genesis will never yield itself to that. But if we give to the narrative of creation the interpretation that we have been considering, a flood of light falls upon it; it all becomes clear and luminous. We have no longer to deal with baseless or arbitrary scientific hypotheses, such as the nebula of Laplace, the "first matter" of the schoolmen, the primordial and eternal world of pantheists and evolutionists; but we are simply confronted with a real, a tangible, an incontrovertible fact: *the truth of creation.*

That matter is not and could not be eternal; that the universe owes its existence to an Infinite Eternal Being, who alone possesses the very fountain of being, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of

lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting,"—all this, I say, are verities which stand at the very foundation of Bible teaching, and which science also, true, honest science, can conclusively corroborate. But if we want to find in Genesis the schematic forms of the geologist, the classifications of the naturalist, the atoms and the primeval simple matter of the chemist, then we shall be sorely disappointed: there is nothing in Genesis of that. In Genesis there is truth; and truth says that "in the beginning, heaven and earth sprang suddenly into being in the full perfection of their respective nature," and did *not* evolve slowly from primeval matter, from a most simple atom, from a nebula, from some primeval and single element, let it be hydrogen or whatever else the poetic imagination of chemists may still invent! This latter theory is absolutely baseless, and I defy all the chemists of the world to prove it. Even now, after the millenniums that our earth has existed, no simple bodies naturally exist, but only composite ones. The element is an artificial product of man, which he extracts from the chemical combination of which it is part and parcel.

Those who imagine the world to have been developed from one element only, and man from a cell, and consign these foolish ideas to books, write trashy novels; they do not produce scientific books.

Two facts are affirmed in Genesis, and only two: first, the creation of heaven and earth by the Almighty God; and second, the reconstruction of the earth after it had been destroyed through the Devil's work. The former is stated in the first verse; the latter is described in the third. Between the two facts chaos intervenes.

Chaos is described in the second verse. This description has ever been the stumbling-block of scientists, Christian as well as unbelieving. Scientists radically adulterate the idea of the Biblical chaos, and then, having perverted it at will, they build up thcir hypotheses! Is it to be wondered at if the latter are contrary to the facts as narrated in Genesis? They turn the Biblical chaos into an elementary matter, containing as in a germ all things, from the chemical atom of dead matter to the primordial cell of living plants and to the ovules of animals. Now in the second verse of Genesis nothing is said to warrant all this. The Biblical chaos, as already stated, is "a great dark ocean," in

Hebrew, *tehom,* in Greek, *abyss,* "that covers the earth," which certainly exists, but does not possess any order and distribution of parts, has no embellishments, does not contain formed bodies, nor light, nor heat, nor any movement whatever. The Biblical chaos had no order, no embellishments, no distinct parts, no light, no movement; all this is distinctly stated in the second and third verses of Genesis.

Light first shone at the bidding of God, and movement began when the Spirit of God, the strong wind of God, shook its mighty wings over the face of the abyss. The Biblical chaos was not primitive matter, co-eternal with God, and containing as in a germ all things; but it was a world in dissolution, a world fallen into a ruinous state. The earth was there still, but covered by an immense quantity of water, part of which God afterward raised above the firmament or solar sky. Light, sun, moon and planets really existed within the radius of chaos, but, owing to the vast masses of water in which they lay buried, they had become quite invisible. Thus God did not create light on the first day, but he ordered it to become visible, to appear, that being the meaning of the Hebrew word in the third verse of Genesis. The firmament, likewise, existed within the expanse of

chaos; so it was not created (Hebrew, *bara)* but raised up, caused to return to its place, where it divided the waters of the earth from the waters which the Bible constantly affirms to exist above the sky. In like manner there still existed under the waters of chaos the seeds of herbs, plants, and fruit-yielding trees, because the appalling catastrophe, caused by water not by fire, had not destroyed them; and so God orders the earth, no sooner it emerged from the waters of the abyss, to bring them forth.

Animal life, on the contrary, had been utterly destroyed in the great cataclysm, and so God, on the fifth day, proceeds to a new creation. In fact, the inspired writer uses here the creative word *bara.* The Scofield Reference Bible notes that only three creative acts of God are recorded in the first chapter of Genesis: the heavens and the earth, verse 1; animal life, verse 21; human life, verses 26, 27. The first creative act refers to the primitive earth, and *gives scope* for all geological ages; the second and the third refer to the earth's reconstruction and to the creation of its king, man.

This and no other is the Biblical chaos, as described in the first chapter of Genesis. What can science oppose to all this? Nothing, abso-

lutely nothing. Science can only wonder in reverent silence at the marvelous work of the Almighty, who restored order in chaos, made light appear, reëstablished the firmament, raised the superior waters; made the sun, moon, and planets again visible; commanded the earth to produce herbs, plants, and fruitful trees; and at the end created *(bara)* animals and man. Is all this senseless and absurd? Is it anti-scientific? Is it impossible? Who will dare to say so?

Geologists look on the earth itself for the record of its own history. So far they are right, provided however they do not place too great a confidence in their tabulated *hypotheses.* Scientists are apt to mistake hypotheses for hard facts; in this they are wrong. A hypothesis will never be a fact unless proved by facts and sound reasoning. Scientists often lack the former, almost always the latter. It is universally known that geologists divide and assign an epoch to stratified rocks according to their characteristic fossils. But the history of life has been very imperfectly preserved in the stratified parts of the earth's crust. Apart from the fact that, even under the most favorable conditions, only a small proportion of the total flora and fauna of any period could be

preserved in the fossil state, enormous gaps occur, where no record has been preserved at all. It is as if whole chapters and books were missing from a historical work. Some of these lacunæ (gaps) are sufficiently obvious. Thus, in some cases, powerful convulsions have thrown considerable portions of the rocks out of sight. Sometimes, an extensive metamorphosis has so affected them that their original character, including their organic contents, have been destroyed. Still more often, denudation has come into play, and vast masses of fossiliferous rocks have been entirely worn away. That this cause has operated frequently is shown by the abundant want of conformity in the structure of the earth's crust.

From all these facts (they are hard facts, not hypotheses) it is clear that the geological record, as it now exists, is at the best but an imperfect chronicle of geological history. In no country is it complete. The lacunæ (gaps) of one country must be supplied from another. Yet in proportion to the geographical distance between the localities where the gaps occur, and those whence the missing intervals are supplied, the element of uncertainty in our reading of the record is increased. Nevertheless, from this record alone can the history of the earth

be traced. It contains the registers of the births and deaths of tribes of plants and animals, which have from time to time lived on earth. Only an infinitesimal part of the total number of species that have appeared in past times have thus been chronicled; yet by collecting the broken fragments of the geological record an outline, at least, of the history of life upon earth can be deciphered. *And this is far from being favorable to the arrogant claims of the evolution theory.*

Geologists speak of the life-time of the earth as Eozoic, or dawn of life; Palaeozoic, or ancient life; Mesozoic, or middle life; Neozoic, new or modern life. No man has yet measured its vastness; but the entire duration of our earth is but a single pulsation of the mighty life of the universe. Now from all these geological data, geologists, such as Professor Huxley, Ramsay, Darwin, Wallace, Stoppani, affirm that "almost all the higher forms of life must have existed during the Palaeozoic period" (Huxley): and that "before the lowest Cambrian stratum was deposited long periods elapsed, as long as, or probably far longer than, the whole interval from the Cambrian age to the present day; and that during these vast periods the world swarmed with living crea-

tures" (Darwin: Origin of Species, 6th Edit., page 286). How Darwin could, after such a candid confession, uphold the theory of evolution I fail to see; but I suppose that he, while speaking sensibly as a geologist, committed himself to foolish statements as a philosopher. Let us remember Cicero again: "Nothing is so absurd that it has not been said by one or another of the philosophers."

According to our interpretation, our earth passed through three stages or phases. It was first created in absolute beauty and perfection. Of that first condition or phase of the earth the Bible does not say much. We can only infer that the heavens and the earth were then, without comparison, more beautiful, rich, and wonderful than at present; as also, 6,000 years ago, the earth was vastly more beautiful, fruitful, and rich than now. It is not physical progress that prevails in the world, but degeneracy. Our creation is getting gradually older, poorer, and uglier; the earth, moreover, is constantly drying up, becoming less habitable, and by degrees becoming a desert. The Bible continually teaches that all creatures,—even the heavens,—save God alone, grow old. The progressive decay and degeneration of the earth and of man is a fact, which can be proved beyond the pos-

sibility of doubt. Let him who wonders at this study natural history, geology, and anthropology; let him travel; let him interrogate, as to human history, the records of the past; and he will arrive at the truth, which states that "not evolution, but involution, is the great law of the universe." Involution means the imperfect from the perfect, the simple from the composite, the immoral from the moral, ugliness from beauty, crime and vice from innocence, disorder from order, death from life. Of the first phase of creation, absolute beauty and perfection, the earth has preserved a certain trace that will be noted later.

The second phase in the history of the earth embraces the period when, the earth having been destroyed by the demoniacal cataclysm, it became disorder, confusion, darkness, chaos. We know of it that alone which the Bible and the books of the nations tell us. But of this period also, as of the primitive creation, the earth has kept a most vivid record.

The third phase in the history of our solar system embraces the six days of the earth's reconstruction through the work of Almighty God. This reconstruction is narrated in the first chapters of Genesis; and of this also the earth preserves a sad record, mentioned by

Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature [lit., creation] waiteth for the manifestation [lit., unveiling] of the sons of God. For the creature [creation] was made subject to vanity [Gr., folly, disorder, unreasonableness], not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:18-23). Paul teaches that the earth, no less so than its inhabitants, is in bondage and in disorderly condition by reason of him who has subjected the same. The English translation of these verses is somewhat faulty, and its divisions are still more so. Satan is, of course, he who subjected the earth to vanity; i. e., to disorders. When Satan shall be bound, and the children of God manifested (lit., unveiled),

then the earth also will be ransomed and rescued from the power of Satan, the prince and god of this world.

We must now return to the Babylonian Poem of Creation and compare a few more of its narratives with those corresponding in Genesis. The Bible represents the divine Architect of the universe in the act of reconstructing the earth, which the Devil had destroyed. God first calls forth light. Afterward he separates the waters from the waters; the waters that are to be above the sky from the waters that properly belong to our earth. The Scripture distinguishes these very clearly; and the Babylonian poem, likewise, describes two oceans, a salt-water one (Tiamat), and another of sweet water (Apsu), distinct, and at the same time confused together. These two oceans, considered as one, with the Bible as well as with the Babylonian poem constitute the dark abyss, the Hebrew Tehom, the Babylonian Tiamat, the Greek chaos and abyss. Ea kills by a word the dragon of the sweet-water ocean, and he himself dwells in it. Ea, in the Babylonian poem, is the god of wisdom and light, and is at the same time the god of the upper waters. With the destruction of Apsu the sweet-water ocean is definitely separated from the salt-water

ocean. Later on, Marduk, Ea's son, will create the earth and the solar system out of the body of Tiamat, the salt-water ocean, i. e., chaos.

The parallelism between Genesis and the Oriental poem could hardly be more complete. In the latter, the war between the gods of order and the dragons of chaos lasts apparently for some time, and the world destroyed by them is reconstructed slowly and by degrees, as in the Bible. The Biblical waters which God gathers in one place, that the dry (the dry land) may appear, are certainly salt waters, because they constituted the seas. The word is plural, not singular, because the seas are many and yet they are one. What is the nature of the waters which God by the firmament separated from the waters below? They were undoubtedly sweet waters; in fact, many commentators think them to have been a kind of vapor, which cannot be, when condensed, other than sweet water.

Afterward God proceeds to the creation of the vegetable world. The earth is dry, free from salt waters, and so it can bring forth. It is commanded to produce herbs, grass, and trees yielding fruit, and it does so. This botanical classification is the most natural of all. The vegetable world is still divided into grasses, herbs or shrubs, and trees. The vegetable

world is not created out of nothing. In the cataclysm which overthrew the world, the seeds, obedient to God's command, germinated and gave origin to a world of flowers, shrubs, grasses, herbs and trees. Botanists know quite well that seeds will long remain under water without losing their power of germination. Water, if not boiling, kills scarcely any vegetable germs.

The earth being green with grasses and plants, God orders the sun, moon, and planets to appear in the sky. In the Babylonian poem it is distinctly affirmed that the sun was not destroyed by the dragons of chaos: it had only been obscured: and so with the Bible. The sun, moon, and planets are commanded to become visible: they are not created *(bara)*. There is really no mention of stars in the Oriental poem. The planets, together with the earth, make up the human world. In the Bible, likewise, it is principally the planets that are designated under the name stars. This is so well known that many astronomers maintain that Scripture, under the name "the host of heaven," never means the stars but only the planets. The question is still an open one; but we must admit that the host of heaven was generally to the Hebrew what it was to the Chal-

deans: i. e., the planets, not the stars, though the common people worshiped the latter as well.

After the vegetable world, the animal world was created by God. It was created out of nothing *(bara)*, because all animal life had perished in the appalling catastrophe that turned a beautiful world into a chaos. Here again the classification of the animal world, though not scientific, is obvious, natural and perfect. Animal life is divided into two groups: sea creatures and land creatures. Fishes, great whales, and birds, belong to the first group. Domestic animals, creeping things or reptiles, and animals of prey, make up the second. These six classes practically comprehend all animals under the canopy of heaven. Not without good reason birds were included in the first group, because birds are to the air what fishes are to water; hence their skeletons are much alike. I have said that this classification is not scientific; nor is the classification of plants, God having no intention of giving us in the Bible a treatise on botany or zoology. God wished man to know that he had created all things; in consequence, when enumerating the things created by himself, he gives a broad description of all to show that nothing has been left out.

The earth having been formed in all its parts,

and embellished with plants and animals, God at the end proceeds to create its lord and king, man. Here also Scripture makes use of the creative verb, *bara,* to create out of nothing. Man's soul, of course, was created out of nothing; not the body, which was formed of the dust of the ground. And man was *created, not evolved.* This is expressly declared, and the declaration is confirmed by Christ (Matt. 14: 4; Mark 10:6). There is an enormous gulf, a divergence practically infinite, between the lowest man and the highest beast, as Huxley says: and science and discovery have done nothing to bridge that gulf. The missing link between man and beast is still missing, and it will never be found. Fossil man does not exist, and it is useless to look for him. Infidel anthropology is no science at all. Haeckel's "discoveries" were proved to be utterly untrue, nothing more. Man was created by God, where and when the Bible tells us. He has not been very long upon earth. He was created on a Friday, just as the last Adam died on a Friday. First man was created, then woman. The first woman from the first man, and because of man; to indicate the natural dependence of woman on man. Afterward, no man came into the world except through a woman,

to indicate that woman is not man's servant or slave, but his friend, his help, his mate. In their respective souls, and before God, man and woman are perfectly equal; so also perfectly equal,—though in kind, not in quality—in their intellectual and emotional gifts and powers; equal in their rights and duties toward men and toward God.

Thus was accomplished the great work of the reconstruction of the world. It was finished in seven days,—a mysterious number, a mystical number, the number of perfection. In it God gave man the measure of time and of human life, correspondent to the movements of the sun, moon and planets, which he had created "to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years." Even more, after so many centuries of man's almost complete rebellion against God, men still measure the week by the seven days of the Biblical creation. That week was a mysterious symbol of higher things, a parable of seven millenniums of human life on earth, the last evening of which will see the dawn of a happier and an eternal day. I ask again what honest science can object to in this marvelous, noble, and mysterious history of the seven days of creation and reconstruction. A spiritually minded man will acquiesce in

silent wonder; the carnal, the proud, the ignorant, the wiseacres, will not understand and will blaspheme what they ignore. But the Bible was not written for them!

I have said that in our earth traces have remained of the primitive creation of the earth, as it was before the demonical destruction. Even to school boys are known the poetic pictures, the ideal forests, the lovely meadows, streams and rivulets of the Carboniferous Epoch, when, according to a theory accepted as incontestably true by all geologists, the earth was much warmer than now, the precipitation of rain more abundant, and far richer in carbonic acid. The earth was then covered with gigantic forests, from one pole to the other; we can still perceive the remains of these, although in a very small proportion, in the coal deposits that exist everywhere, from north to south, in the cold, temperate, tropical, and torrid regions. Those forests were overrun by gigantic animals, colossal winged serpents, enormous crocodiles, huge elephants, strange and frightful birds, the skeletons of which may be seen in the museums of the world.

It is my belief that the Carboniferous Epoch of our earth is a fragmentary record of the primitive earth, before its destruction took

place. The earth of those distant times was infinitely more beautiful than the present one, richer in vegetable and animal forms, more wealthy in useful and precious metals and gems,—such, indeed, as to defy the most vivid imagination of poets and novelists. And the whole earth was, then, so lovely! In fact, those tropical forests where thousands of palms and gigantic ferns raised their feathery leaves to the sky, now seen only in India, Brazil, and torrid Africa, then grew everywhere: on the banks of the Thames as at the foot of the Alps; in the center of Asia, now a desert, as in India; at the poles, near the Great Lakes of the United States, and in the very center of the Sahara desert. Geologists attribute the Carboniferous formations to the palaeozoic age, a very ancient period of the earth, the second one from its beginning, the dawn of life. I attribute the same to the primitive earth. The tabulated epochs of geologists deserve, as we heard from Huxley, and even from Darwin, very little consideration; but when contrasted with Genesis, they deserve none. He who has read only one book of geology may think it a science; should you read two independent books, you immediately lose confidence; if you read a number of them, you are forced to exclaim "We know very little,

next to nothing, and the little we know is very doubtful!" The writer of this book is a geologist, and a Director of Mines into the bargain!

The first earth, the earth overrun by the gigantic animals, has left some distant record in the coal deposits that man finds all over the world. Those gigantic animals were proportioned to that earth, not to ours; and so man never saw them. Here also the principle of decadence prevails, not the principle of indefinite progress. The second earth, the earth of the reconstruction, though beautiful, was far inferior in beauty to the first one; as the earth of Adam and Eve was far better, richer, and more lovely than the earth of the present day. For the earth is slowly, gradually, but surely, drying up and turning into a desert. Man, under Satan, the prince and god of this world, is slowly destroying the earth by cutting down its forests; whence the denudation of mountains, the landslips of hills and terraces, the silting up of rivers and sea coasts, the changing of climates and regular seasons, the growth of malaria and other deadly diseases, and, finally, the desert, solitude, and death. Not without reason the earth was cursed together with Adam, and the whole creation now "groaneth and travaileth in pain, wishing to be delivered

from the bondage of corruption, and waiting for the manifestation [the unveiling] of the sons of God, when the creation will get free from that awful tyrant who has subjected it to corruption" (Rom. 8:22).

Has chaos likewise left any record of itself in our earth? Undoubtedly, and here geology fully corroborates the Bible. The interior of our globe shows everywhere the unmistakable marks of an appalling catastrophe, which all geologists admit, but which they explain in various ways. The writer of these lines is a geologist and a chemist, who for years taught physical science as well. He is, therefore, necessarily pretty familiar with his subject. Geologists have not yet succeeded in formulating a tabulated scheme or diagram indicating, in order of time, the rocks that succeeded one another in the fabric of the earth, for the reason that they are confronted with two facts, equally certain and equally mysterious.

That is, there is an apparent order and regularity in the disposition of the rocks; and there is also a manifest disorder which disturbs this regularity in many ways and renders utterly useless and baseless any theory or tabulated plan! The disorder is of such a nature that it seems due to a cosmic cataclysm, to a catastro-

phe which, not by degrees and slow means, but very suddenly acted on the rocks and within the very bowels of the earth. This order and disorder amid the rocks constituting the backbone of our earth *is a fact,* not a theory or a hypothesis. Hence some geologists, fixing their gaze exclusively on the regular strata of the earth's crust, formulate plausible theories about them and draw tabulated schemes of the rocks of the earth. But other geologists, who keep an eye on the constant, universal, and profound irregularities that one meets in the successive strata of the earth's crust, laugh at the tabulated theories of their compeers, and retire into a disdainful agnosticism.

Hence geology is hardly a science at all. It tries empirically to say something about the formation of the earth's crust, but sound reasoning and the certain data from experiments forbid us to lay down any theory as certain and definite. Geology is a science in the making, a science of the future, not certainly a science to-day. Its three principal theories as to the origin of rocks, plutonism, neptunism, and vulcanism, have ended in skepticism. Theories follow one another in quick succession and satisfy no one. Not a day passes that does not see new hypotheses, new schemes, new plans,

new tabulated results, as to the formation of the earth; in reality there is a Babel of tongues and nothing more. If any reader doubts this assertion, let him consult books on geology and he will undeceive himself.

Must we wonder at all this? By no means. Geologists have undertaken an impossible task! Looking upon an immense globe of ruins and broken fragments, they want to tell us how the first fabric of the earth rose and came into being. A vain labor, a useless effort! They will never succeed in their endeavors. If, however, laying aside their preconceived ideas of evolution, they accept the Bible's account of the reconstruction of the earth, they will have light in the darkness by which they are surrounded. The internal structure of the earth will not appear, then, as mysterious as now.

It has been demonstrated that crystalline rocks, believed to have been caused by fire, can be produced by water as well; water is the great solving agent, which dissolves everything, and under certain conditions even dissolves limestones, silicates, and metals. For a time plutonism prevailed in geology; afterward neptunism; then both theories were modified by vulcanism; now geologists are lost in minutiæ, and by specializing fail to see the great facts

of the universe. The Bible describes chaos. In chaos water prevailed; and water prevails still on the earth. Not only seas and oceans form the largest portion of the world, but who is able to say how much water circulates underground, between the crust and the central nucleus of the earth? That vast masses of water do exist there is not a theory or a hypothesis, but a well proved fact.

So it is a fact that vast masses of rock, of a nature altogether different, have invaded regular strata of the earth, have passed through them, perforating them from end to end, have penetrated them, dislocated them in every direction and from every angle. The cause of all this? Water or fire? Or water and fire combined?

There prevails now among geologists a theory about our earth which one may believe to be very well grounded, and which the writer accepts. They think that fire had, in reality, very little to do with our earth; in consequence, most of the crystalline rocks, once attributed to the agency of fire, are now thought to be due to the powerful agency of water. They also believe that the great mountain chains, once supposed to have been raised up by volcanoes, are the result of other forces, some violent,

most of them slow and gradual, and subject moreover to chemical processes of vast and far-reaching effects. They finally teach that our earth in most ancient times, before the appearance of man, underwent an appalling catastrophe, by reason of which the earth's axis was displaced and broken into pieces, and that in consequence the earth was literally upset, disembowelled, destroyed. As the Scandinavian mythology and the Egyptian priests assert, "after the catastrophe the sun rose where before it set," thus showing how universal, how deep, how appalling the cataclysm was.

The signs of this catastrophe are not wanting, partly physical, partly geological, astronomical, and chemical. One of these is generally known to people who are not familiar with geology and astronomy. It is a very well-known fact that, as mentioned above, during the Carboniferous Epoch the terrestrial equator passing through what are now cold and northern regions, while regions that now are tropical or torrid lay under a thick sheet of ice, immersed in the most intense cold. This fact is attributed by most geologists to the breaking of the axis of the earth, which was due, according to some, to the powerful attraction of a star that came too near our earth; others main-

tain that the catastrophe was due to the pouring out of immense masses of lava which, lying on the surface of the earth, caused it by their great weight to lose its center of gravity. Still others put forward other reasons. The *fact* is certain; the explanation uncertain and doubtful.

May I suggest an explanation that is at least as plausible as those alluded to? The Bible, the Babylonian Poem of Creation, the Book of Enoch, the ancient Vedic, Persian, Sandinavian, Etruscan and Greek poems narrate the fall of the rebellious angels from heaven upon the earth. The consequence of that fall was the destruction of our earth. This is certain. But how was that destruction effected? I am inclined to think that, by their fall, the angels displaced the vast masses of waters that undoubtedly exist above our sky. The ocean of sweet waters, represented in the Babylonian Poem of Creation by Apsu, fell down and mixed its waters with the salt-water ocean represented by Tiamat. That immense weight of water displaced the earth's axis, broke it to pieces, and thus literally destroyed the earth. This havoc was effected through water, not by fire.

The entire Bible is filled with this idea. Ac-

cording to the Scripture there is a heaven of the heavens where God dwells, among an almost infinite number of stars, i. e., angels. There is also a stellar heaven, and there is the heaven of our sun, moon and planets. There are waters over our sky; and, once upon a time, there was an abyss or chaos, possessed or guarded by Rahab, Leviathan and other dragons, who were the dragons of the abyss. The earth, says the Bible, was covered "with a deep [abyss] as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains." It was chaos. But at the rebuke of God "they fled; at the voice of thy [God's] thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou [God] hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth" (Psa. 104). The sacred poet does not speak here of the deluge. It is the Song of the Creation, not the poem of the deluge. The waters which, at the deluge, drowned all men, were the ministers of God's wrath against humanity; here the waters are rebuked by God and chased away by him. These waters are the ministers of Satan's spite against the Almighty. The primitive earth was created by God most beautiful and perfect; our earth, as

Scripture says, was made to stand "out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Pet. 3:5).

The Babylonian poem teaches the same thing. Apsu the sweet-water ocean joins Tiamat the salt-water ocean. The two gods of disorder join together to fight the gods of order. They mingled their waters in one. Did the weight of the waters that are over the sky suffice, when fallen upon the earth, to displace its axis? Who can reasonably deny it? Yea, only a great weight, a colossal weight laid on the earth's surface could displace its center of gravity and break its axis. Was this the mode of action resorted to by the rebellious angels in order to destroy the earth, and reduce it to a chaos? It is more than probable, and the earth bears still the marks of the catastrophe.

The magnificent tropical forests with which the earth was then covered lay buried under the colossal ruin, and became, through the course of centuries, the actual coal-fields of our day. The gigantic animals that peopled our planet suffered the same fate as the forests, and perished all together by a violent and sudden death; and we now find a few of them in a fossil state, perfectly preserved. These fos-

sils are, to my belief, a vestige, a trace, a sign, a relic of that awful catastrophe, brought about by the wickedness of Satan and of his rebellious angels. No fossils are formed now, either in the vegetable or animal kingdom. There is no record of any really fossilized animal, the date of whose burial can be historically certain. For many millenniums plants, animals, men, dead and buried, have decayed through slow chemical alterations and are sooner or later reduced to dust, according to the divine command, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The sentence of God against sinful man was extended to the whole creation, which suffers, groans and travails together with man, on account of his sin, because of our sins. When the sons of God shall be delivered from bondage, then the creation also shall rejoice in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

A word in conclusion. In the Bible analogies are often solid proofs. Noah and his wife stood, in relation to the earth of their days, as Adam and Eve stood in relation to the earth of their time. The earth of Noah had just come forth from the catastrophe of the deluge: so, likewise, the earth of Adam and Eve had just issued from the havoc of the demoniacal fury,—i. e., it had issued from the waters, as Genesis

and Peter describe. The analogy is perfect; and is another point of evidence, among the many brought forward, to prove our interpretation of Genesis.

The interpretation of Genesis that we have followed out through this book is the true one, and the only true one. It is not contrary to science; on the other hand it sheds a flood of light on true science. It closely follows the Biblical symbolism, which always takes darkness to mean the forces of nature,—i. e., Satan and his kingdom; whereas light is the symbol of Grace, of Love, of God. It fully agrees with the sacred books of the nations, and especially with the most ancient Babylonian Poem of Creation. The teaching is found constantly throughout the Old and New Testaments, and has the authority of our Lord and of the apostles. It once occupied an honorable place in the Christian world, which, unfortunately, it lost later on. Happy are we if in the light of Genesis, thus interpreted, we increase our knowledge of God and of his holiness, and come to know also the awful strength and wiles of the Devil, whose constant effort is to thwart, oppose, and destroy God's works. But God and his Christ do not abandon their children to the cruelty of the prince and god of this world. "He that com-

mitteth sin," says John, "is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil" (John 3:8). Christians need not be discouraged; the Son of God is constantly at our side undoing, destroying, the works which the Devil, the great enemy of God, is plotting against us.